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# THE TIMES

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No. 65,664

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 21 1996

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## THE TIMES GREAT SUMMER OF SPORT

**SOUTHGATE  
PAYS THE  
PENALTY**  
Terry Venables  
Exclusive  
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**ROBSON'S  
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WIND ONE ORANGE MOORE  
OFFICE  
SYSTEM  
WORTH £1,916  
TOWN INSIDE

Tories reward party 'spin doctors'

## Peerage for man behind demon poster

By Jill Sherman, Chief Political Correspondent

MAURICE SAATCHI, the advertising guru behind the controversial "demon" poster of Tony Blair, becomes one of 14 new life peers to be announced today. The honour is a reward for over 17 years' service to the Conservative Party.

Mr Saatchi, 50, who has been pivotal in four successive Tory general election victories, is joined by Peter Gummer, the chairman of Shandwick plc., and chairman designate of the Royal Opera House, who has also been a key public relations adviser to the Tories for several years.

John Taylor, the Tory candidate who became involved in a damaging race row at the last general election, is also among the six Tory "working peers" announced by Downing Street today. Mr Taylor, a barrister, becomes the Tories' first peer of Afro-Caribbean descent.

He lost the Cheltenham seat, which had been held by the Tories for more than 20 years, to the Liberal Democrats after his local party was split over whether to back him. Since then it had been widely assumed that he would be unable to win another Tory seat.

Yesterday Mr Taylor said: "I know it's a cliché, but this is something which has made my dreams come true. This is the rainbow after the rain. This has more than made up for 1992."

Last night, Labour seized on the awards to the top Tory "spin doctors", claiming that the peerage system had sunk to new depths. "No coronets



Saatchi: pivotal in four Tory election victories

and is now being investigated by the Advertising Standards Authority.

Even the actor whose eyes were used in the poster has denied that he knew the purpose of the advertisement. He says he will back Mr Blair in the election.

The 14 awards yesterday include six Tory life peers, six Labour peers and two Liberal Democrats. Mr Major has responsibility for deciding how many working peers to appoint overall and how many for each party, but the two leaders of the main opposition parties were invited to submit their own lists.

Labour peers have been awarded to Sir Richard Rogers, the award-winning architect whose work includes the Pompidou Centre in Paris and the Lloyd's building in the City.

Mr Blair has rewarded innovators and high flyers rather than the traditional patronage given to trade unionists or former MPs.

His appointments include Swraj Paul, the Indian-born chairman of the Caparo Group, the largest family-owned company in Britain. Dr Paul made headlines for donating £1 million to London Zoo to build the Ambika Paul Children's Zoo in memory of his daughter, who died of Leukaemia.

Elizabeth Symonds, who announced her resignation as the general secretary of the top civil servants' union on the eve of being awarded a life peerage, is now tipped for a

Continued on page 2 col 7



The interior of the royal mausoleum. The inset statue on the left is of Isaiah by Hermann Hultsch; that on the right of Daniel by Gustav Kuntz. Above these are paintings of the evangelists by Nicola Consoni

## Rare glimpse of Victoria's tomb

By Alan Hamilton

BANK holiday sightseers with a taste for the sepulchral will have an opportunity this weekend to see inside the grandest of all English royal tombs, which *The Times* was granted rare permission to photograph yesterday.

Queen Victoria had always wanted a mausoleum for herself and her beloved Prince Albert, having seen those of her continental relatives. Within days of Albert's death in December 1861 she had found the ideal site, a sequestered corner of the gardens of Frogmore House in Windsor Home Park, which was completed in 1868.

Traditionally, the mausoleum has been open for one day each year on the

Wednesday nearest Victoria's birthday, May 24. Now that the Queen has directed that the public should have wider access to the entire royal collection, many more people will have a chance to see the overpowering grandeur in which her great-grandmother lies.

Victoria summoned the architects who had created a mausoleum for her uncle Leopold of Saxe-Coburg. They produced a cruciform in the style of a 13th century Italian church, and on the Queen's orders filled the interior with decoration and sculpture in the style of Raphael, regarded by Prince Albert as the greatest painter who ever lived.

On a massive granite sarcophagus, the recumbent marble effigies of this deeply devoted couple lie side by side, Victoria

looking far more youthful than her 82 years at death. Their heads lie together, but the bump in the shroud concealing the queen's feet gives away the fact that she was barely five feet tall.

Above the main tomb, the central dome rises 70 feet and just behind the mausoleum is a private royal burial ground from which visitors are discouraged. The infinitely simpler tombs of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor are not the ones they want you to see.

Royal Mausoleum, Frogmore House (on B3021 between Old Windsor and Datchet). Open Sat, Sun, Mon, this weekend only, 11-4. Adults £4.50 and concessions.

Leading article, page 15

## DNA tests clear boys in case of murdered schoolgirl

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

DNA tests have ruled out five British boys in the continuing investigation into the rape and murder of schoolgirl Caroline Dickinson. French police said yesterday.

On Monday the boys, who are aged between 12 and 17 and were on the school trip to France with the murdered girl, gave blood and saliva samples to French detectives in Launceston, Cornwall, with their parents' permission.

Mrs Katherine Parnall, the solicitor representing the five boys, said: "If the boys were ever suspects then the scientific evidence now confirms their innocence and eliminates them."

After the test were taken they were immediately flown to a laboratory in France to be matched with samples taken from the body of the 13-year-old, who was raped and suffocated last month in a Brittany youth hostel while her room-mates slept just a few feet away.

Mrs Parnall said: "This has been a traumatic time for these young people and we hope any interest in their activities will now cease."

"No one wants to detract from the suffering of the victim's family and we all hope the perpetrator of this terrible crime will be apprehended as soon as possible. I have spoken to the parents today and one cannot stress too highly how traumatic it has been for these boys."

Caroline's body was found on July 18 in the hostel at Pléne-Fougères near St Malo. Two days later French police arrested Patrice Padé, a 39-year-old homeless man, who was charged with the crimes after allegedly confessing. On August 6, French investigators admitted that DNA tests showed M Padé was innocent and he was released.

## Pakistan fans invade Lord's

Supporters of Pakistan invaded the pitch at Lord's during the under-15 cricket match against India yesterday.

At least two people were hurt in the disturbance, during which stumps were uprooted and cans thrown and which was quelled by police. India beat Pakistan by four wickets. Page 37

## Minister pledges to clear the air

Britain's air will be fit to breathe by 2005, according to John Gummer, the Environment Secretary, who unveils Europe's first national air quality strategy today.

Targets have been set to reduce eight hazardous pollutants produced by cars and lorries but also by industry and agriculture. Page 4

## Lebed accuses rivals of forging Yeltsin orders

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA'S leadership was plunged into chaos last night, after General Aleksandr Lebed, the country's security chief, charged Kremlin hardliners with forging President Yeltsin's signature on a decree ordering the recapture of Grozny.

In an astonishing declaration, the tough former paratrooper, who also serves as the Kremlin's troubleshooter on Chechnya, in effect questioned whether the ailing Russian leader is still running the country.

The order, divulged on Sunday, is that Grozny be returned to government control, as before the rebel offensive on August 6. It was interpreted by military commanders in Chechnya as approval for an all-out military offensive starting tomorrow to retake the capital. That would almost certainly cost thousands of civilian lives and destroy General Lebed's ceasefire, peace initiative and credibility.

"The contents of the documents give solid grounds to doubt that the President of Russia took a direct part in finalising the text of the order," said a statement by General Lebed's Security Council. It added that the order was full of contradictions and was not signed by the Russian leader. Instead it used a "facsimile" of his signature.

General Lebed's accusation took on added meaning after a flurry of reports suggesting that Mr Yeltsin had suffered a relapse of his heart condition and that he may be considering surgery. The Kremlin, attempting to dampen specu-

## Couples may soon 'I do it' at a B&Q

By Robin Young

ACCORDING to the jingle, "You can do it if you B&Q it." Now, if Britain's largest DIY retailer gets its way, that will extend to marriage. B&Q has applied for its new 5,500sq ft superstore in Cambridge to be registered as a venue for civil marriages.

Emma Carrigan, the store manager, said: "It is being done very tastefully. We are the first of B&Q's 280 stores to apply to offer weddings."

An upstairs office has been decorated to a design by Kelly Odell, the store's in-house designer, and staff are waiting to hear if the licence is granted before adding the finishing touches, including voile and co-ordinated curtains to diffuse the light and create a romantic atmosphere. One member of the staff is already considering being married in the store.

Weddings at B&Q would cost more than those at the Shire Hall in Cambridge. Adrian Wright, the Superintendent Registrar, said yesterday that the national charge at register offices was £46.50. Weddings not performed in the register office in Cambridge would be charged at £121.50 on weekdays and more at weekends.

"B&Q's is a nice little room capable of holding about 20 people, including ourselves," he added, "and the staff are trying to create a really friendly atmosphere."



## Decibel problem for actors at the new Globe

By Dalya Alberge, Arts Correspondent

THE actors performing in tonight's inaugural production at the reconstructed Globe Theatre have been coached in the art of "projecting" their voices, and even shouting, to make themselves heard. For the reconstructed Elizabethan theatre—with its open roof—is directly under the flight path for Heathrow.

Even Shakespeare's fertile imagination drew the line at aircraft, pneumatic drills, car horns and police sirens. Not that Shakespeare's cast had it all their own way: 16th century audiences were notorious for talking, drinking and even throwing fruit at performers they disapproved of.

Yesterday, Mark Rylance, the actor and artistic director, was himself struggling to project his voice as he introduced his cast to the world's press. Straining to be heard, he was shouting rather than throwing his voice. Gone were all traces of any RADA-trained "actor's voice".

But he later dismissed suggestions that the cast were having problems with the acoustics. "It's demanding rather than difficult," he insisted. "If I say a line such as 'I love you', I have to make a choice and play it boldly and clearly."

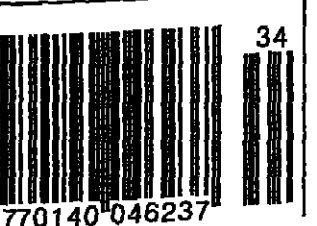
A spokesman said that vacuum cleaners and other machinery, which were blamed for yesterday's noise pollution, will be switched off long

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Black barrister rejected in Cheltenham is elevated to Lords with Tory women's rights campaigners

## This is the rainbow after the rain, says Tory in race row

By JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

JOHN TAYLOR, whose attempt to become the first Conservative MP Afro-Caribbean descent sparked an ugly race dispute within his local party in Cheltenham, said yesterday that his elevation to the Lords was "the rainbow after the rain".

The barrister and broadcaster said: "This has made up for 1992. I know it's a cliché, but this is something which has made my dreams come true."

"There is a lot of goodwill. I feel very encouraged and quite taken by all this. It will be a great challenge."

His father, a professional cricketer who played for Warwickshire in the 1960s, had always told him that his ultimate ambition should be to play at Lord's, he said. "Well, I am going there, but not to play cricket."

Mr Taylor, 42, from Birmingham, has remained an active member of the Conservative Party since the last election, but he has not applied to become a candidate again. The Cheltenham seat had been Tory-held for 20 years. Although he won more than 28,000 votes, the Liberal Democrats won with a slim majority of 1,668.

Local Tories were deeply split over whether Mr Taylor was the right candidate for them and the constituency. He and his family endured the indignity of criticism from within his own party association. As abusive letters and

cartoons were spread around Cheltenham, Mr Taylor said at the time that he felt like Daniel in the lion's den.

Since the defeat, Mr Taylor said that he and his wife, Kathie, had received 20,000 letters encouraging them to ignore what happened. He has pursued a career as a writer and broadcaster and is currently presenting a consumer affairs programme, *The Street*, on BBC2. They have two children, Laura, aged eight, and Alexandra, who is one.

Mr Taylor said he would be an active working peer, paying particular attention to his chief interests of legal affairs and broadcasting issues. He has not yet talked to the Lords authorities about what name he might take, but he doubted that he would become Lord Taylor of Cheltenham.

Although he will be the only peer of Afro-Caribbean descent, there are several of Indian origin, such as the Labour economist Lord Desai and the Tory peer Lady Flather. Lord Pitt of Hampstead, born in the West Indies, was the last Afro-Caribbean peer. He died in 1994.

Senior Labour sources said Mr Taylor's elevation was official recognition that the only way a black person could represent the Tory party in Parliament was to be imposed on the House of Lords. "Conservative associations have shown themselves incapable and unwilling to select such as

candidate as an MP," one source said.

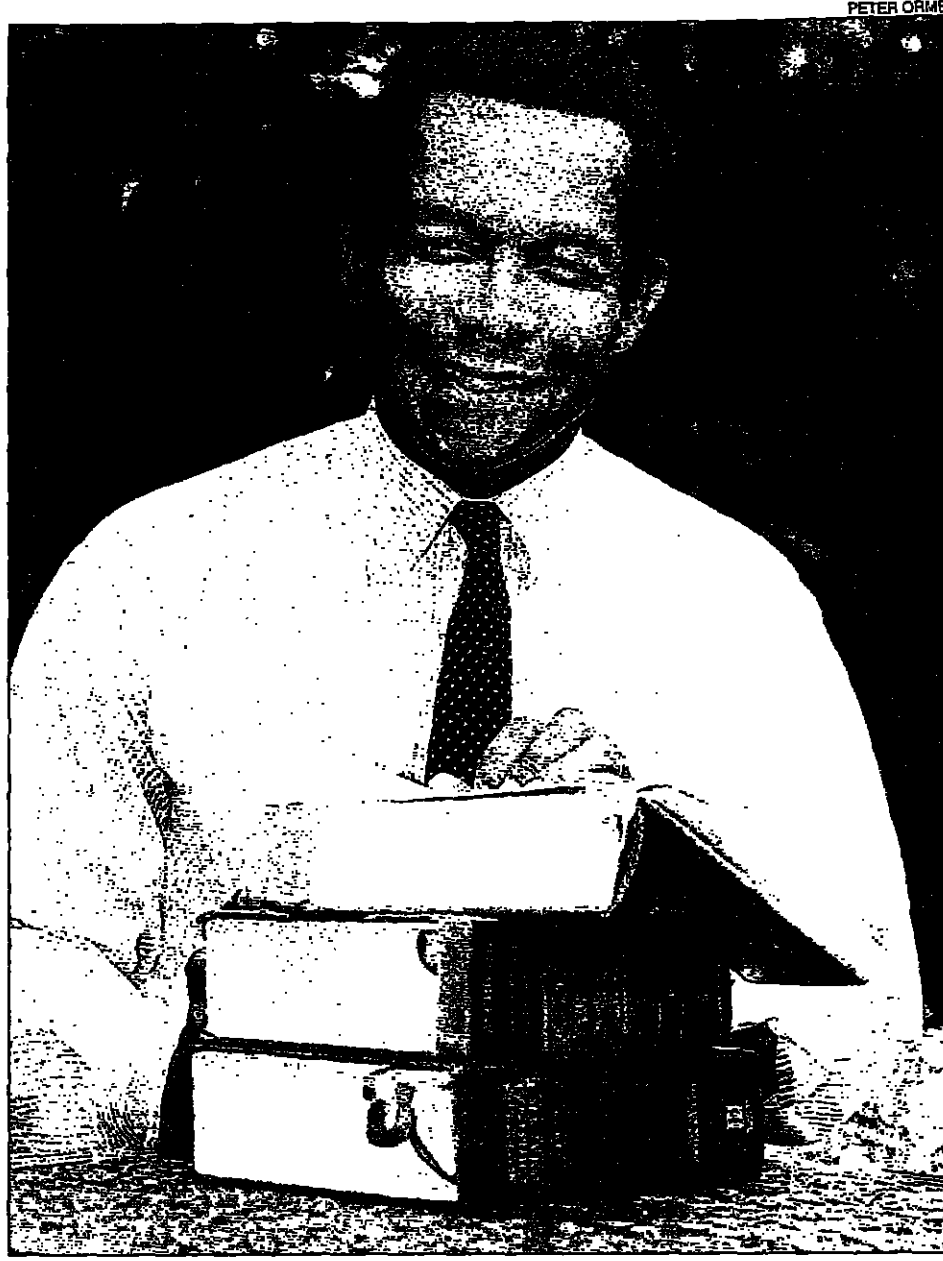
Conservative officials rejected the claim and pointed out that the party had an Asian MP, Niranjan Deva, representing Brentford and Isleworth. Nine other candidates from ethnic minorities were standing at the next general election.

Another new recruit peer to the Tory benches in the Lords is Sir Ian MacLaurin, chairman of Tesco, who is credited with turning the company into Britain's most profitable supermarket chain. This year the company overtook its greatest rival Sainsbury's to become Britain's leading food retailer, with pre-tax profits of £681 million.

Sir Ian, 59, joined Tesco as a management trainee in 1959, and swiftly moved up the ranks. He was appointed chairman in 1985 and knighted in 1989.

Yesterday he said he was very proud to receive the barony. "It is a great honour. I am looking forward to the work enormously as I have an enormous affinity with the Conservative Party."

Two female grandees of the Tory party's voluntary wing, both of whom are ardent campaigners for more women MPs, become baronesses. Dame Joyce Anelay, 49, is vice-chairman of the Conservative Party National Union. She has spent much of her life working for the party and was until recently chairman of the



John Taylor yesterday: he is unlikely to include Cheltenham as part of his title

Conservative Women's National Committee, playing a key role in trying to promote women in the party.

The former secondary school history teacher and consultant in social security law is also a magistrate and a

leading figure in the Citizens Advice Bureaux. Dame Hazel Byford, 55, is president of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations. The daughter of the former Tory MP, Sir Cyril Osborne, she has spent much

of her life involved with the party. She was chairman of the National Committee of Conservative Women from 1990-93. She has been a member of Leicestershire Women's Royal Voluntary Service since she was 20.

## Saatchi takes a rollercoaster ride to the top

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MAURICE SAATCHI'S elevation to the Lords marks the latest upturn in a rollercoaster career considered remarkable even in the unpredictable world of advertising, coming just as he is being vilified for backing the Tories "devil eyes" attack on Tony Blair.

Mr Saatchi's prominent role with his brother Charles in running the last four general election advertising campaigns has brought him closer to John Major than he ever was to Baroness Thatcher. Together with fellow advertising doyens Peter Gummer and Sir Tim Bell, he devised the "New Labour, New Danger" campaign that party strategists hope will help demolish Labour's chances of victory.

Although the party has remained loyal to him and his agency — most notably after he and his brother left the Saatchi & Saatchi agency they founded — he has had mixed success. Best remembered in political circles for devising the "Labour isn't working" advertisement that helped Mrs Thatcher win power in 1979, Mr Saatchi's stock plummeted when his campaign for the 1992 general election was criticised as lacklustre.

However, Mr Major and Brian Mawhinney, the party chairman, were adamant that, despite the criticism and the acrimonious break-up of the old Saatchi empire, the brothers should be retained. The new firm of M&C Saatchi was soon awarded the contract for the next general election.

In an extrovert profession,

Maurice Saatchi became relatively reclusive when his company had to be saved from collapse at the start of the 90s after an over-ambitious expansion. However, he regained the aggression that led to Saatchi & Saatchi becoming one of the world's greatest agencies, fighting a bitter feud before leaving last year.

Almost always dressed in black and white, the 50-year-old shuns the fast-talking style of advertising colleagues and is credited with a keen business eye and endless charm.

It seems only natural that Maurice Saatchi should be joined on the red benches of the Lords by Mr Gummer, chairman of Shandwick, and a close friend with whom he is working closely on the current Tory campaign. Mr Gummer, younger brother of John Gummer, the Environment Secretary, set up Shandwick in 1974 and built it into one of the largest public relations firms in the world. Shandwick's profits peaked in the mid-1980s but were followed by a rocky early 1990s, from which it has since recovered.

Next month he succeeds Sir Angus Stirling as chairman of the Royal Opera House, an appointment not without controversy. He chaired the Arts Council's National Lottery advisory panel when it gave £78.5 million towards the redevelopment of the Royal Opera House — the largest to any single body. He has always been a strong supporter of opera and has stressed that the £200 million redevelopment should enable greater access for all.

## Blair seeks to beef up prospective ministry

By JILL SHERMAN AND JAMES LANDALE



ELIZABETH SYMONS, general secretary of the senior civil servants' trade union and one of six Labour life peers to be announced today, is widely tipped to be a frontbencher in a Labour Government.

Ms Symons, 45, who is to resign as leader of the Association of First Division Civil Servants, was the first woman to be elected head of a Whitehall union seven years ago. Labour sources also emphasise Ms Symons' direct experience of government. A Cambridge graduate, she joined the Civil Service after doing research. She is a friend of Tony Blair.

She could well be joined on Labour's front bench by David Currie,

Professor of Economics at the London Business School, who only recently resigned from the team of economists advising Kenneth Clarke. Professor Currie, who becomes a life peer today, has been informally advising Mr Blair on the economy and could play a significant part in a future Labour Treasury team.

Other Labour life peers include Dr Swraj Paul, the Indian-born chairman of the Caparo Group, the largest family-run business in the country. The Caparo Group has made substantial donations to the Labour Party but has also in the past contributed to Tory funds.

Dr Paul, 65, has a personal fortune of about £85 million, putting him among Britain's 100 richest people. Labour sources said that Mr Paul had

a "huge talent" which had been illustrated by his ability to transform the iron and steel industry in Britain.

Meta Ramsay, the former diplomat and foreign affairs adviser to the late John Smith, becomes a life peer. Once tipped as a possible intelligence chief, Miss Ramsay, 60, is currently an honorary visiting research fellow in peace studies at Bradford University. She sits on the executive committee of the Labour Finance and Industry Group and is a member of the Labour Movement for Europe.

Larry Whitty, general secretary of the Labour Party under Neil Kinnock and Mr Smith, also becomes a peer. Credited with masterminding a radical overhaul of the party machine and its finances, Mr Whitty, 53, was moved to the post of Labour's Euro-

pean co-ordinator after Mr Blair became party leader in 1994.

The award-winning architect Sir Richard Rogers, whose work includes the Pompidou centre in Paris, the Lloyd's building, and Channel 4's new headquarters, also joins Labour's ranks in the Lords.

John Alderdice, leader of Northern Ireland's cross-community Alliance Party, was nominated for a life peerage by Paddy Ashdown. He will speak as Alliance Party leader on Northern Ireland issues, and take the Liberal Democrat whip on wider matters; he will not join Mr Ashdown's party. Dr Alderdice's elevation marks the pivotal role he has played in the search for peace, although his party has been squeezed between the Unionist and nationalist blocs at general elections.

## Peerage for Saatchi

Continued from page 1

front-bench appointment in a Labour government. David Currie, Professor of Economics at the London Business School, and one of the former "wise men" advising Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, on economic strategy, also becomes a Baron. He is being tipped as a member of a Blair-led Labour government.

The Prime Minister can top up the working peers' list at any time during the year, following deaths or retirements, but the honours announcement caught some people by surprise. Some Tory MPs were amazed that Mr Major had decided to go ahead with the list during the

summer recess and while the controversy raged over Mr Saatchi's poster. Although the decision would have been taken several weeks ago, the announcement will be seen as Mr Major's endorsement of the poster. There was also speculation over whether Mr Saatchi would play an active role in the Lords.

Mr Saatchi, who is on holiday, issued a statement insisting that he would not renege on his new duties, although he is not expected to cut down on his advertising business. "I am profoundly honoured and will work diligently for the government cause in the House of Lords," he said.

## Animal activists to stand in Tory seats

Animal rights activists are to challenge 40 Tory MPs in marginal seats at the next election in protest at the Government's refusal to ban live animal exports. Respect for Animals, formerly the anti-fur trade group known as Lynx, believes there are enough traditional Tory supporters who back their campaign and are willing to vote against the Government.

Under the campaign slogan, "Don't vote for a cruel Government", the group's candidates will not seek to attract votes themselves but instead will urge people either to abstain or to vote for a party other than the Tories.

## Cull talks continue

The culling of cattle in Northern Ireland was halted for a second day as the Government continued talks with abattoir owners in a dispute over payment. Slaughterhouse operators in England are also negotiating but have made no threat yet to withdraw from the scheme, part of measures to eliminate BSE. The Government wants to cut by about half the payment per animal killed. The £87.50 fee was set high to get the cull started in May.

## Holiday murder case

Three men have been charged with robbing and murdering a British holidaymaker on an island in the Philippines in May. Linda Vockins, 34, was beaten to death as she walked to a beach and her body dumped in a ravine near the holiday cottage she was renting. The coroner at an inquest in Newbury, Berkshire, yesterday recorded a verdict of unlawful killing on Miss Vockins, a public relations manager from Burghfield Common.

## Coach deaths charges

The coach driver and operator involved in a crash near Raglan, Monmouth, last year in which ten people died are to face charges, the Crown Prosecution Service said. Philip Crisp, the coach driver, faces charges of ten counts of death by dangerous driving as well as other charges. Ronald Lewis, the coach operator, faces four charges, including causing a vehicle to be used with defective brakes. They are due to appear at Abergavenny Magistrates' Court on September 25.

## Loyalist march banned

The Royal Ulster Constabulary has banned a Protestant march from passing through a Roman Catholic section of the Ormeau Road in Belfast this weekend because of fears of sectarian violence. The Black Preceptory Boys, a loyalist group, had intended to walk the mile-long route as part of its annual church parade from its hall in Ballynabagh to its church on the Ormeau Road.

## NHS pays London bill for Allwood

By DOMINIC KENNEDY, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THE NHS has agreed to pay for Mandy Allwood, the mother expecting octuplets, to be treated by the obstetrician of her choice. Two officials met Miss Allwood in secret and promised that the state would foot a bill of up to £500,000 for her and the babies to be cared for by Kypros Nicolaides, an expert in multiple births.

Solihull Health Authority had previously insisted that other patients' services would have to be cut if Miss Allwood was treated at King's College Hospital, London, which charges more for maternity services than its preferred trusts in the Midlands. The authority had demanded that she should be treated locally and refused to approve the bill for Professor Nicolaides.

However, Rod Griffiths, regional director of public health for the West Midlands, said yesterday the NHS would pay. "Maternal choice matters." He had arranged to meet Miss Allwood outside a restaurant in Bagshot, Surrey, on Sunday. She was accompanied by her boyfriend Paul Hudson and a representative of the *News of the World*, which is buying her story for a

six-figure sum. Professor Griffiths was accompanied by Mike Deakin, Solihull's public health consultant.

"It was very cloak-and-dagger stuff," Professor Griffiths said. "It is unusual to provide maternity care to people in hiding." He told Miss Allwood, who is 15 weeks pregnant, that she could continue being treated by Professor Nicolaides, who had been recommended by her consultant in Birmingham.

Professor Griffiths defended Solihull's position because it had been based on the belief that Miss Allwood was still living in the Midlands. She has been at a safe house in Wandsworth, southwest London. "It is entirely possible that she could move again three or four times."

Max Clifford, Miss Allwood's publicist, said of his client last night: "This is someone who has always paid a contribution to the National Health. It is not asking too much that the National Health should help her in times of need." She had moved to the Surrey countryside after photographers found her hideaway in Wandsworth.

## Woman lawyer speaks out on Princess's sexy clothes

By A STAFF REPORTER

THE Princess of Wales and other women should not complain if men take pictures of them when they appear in public in sexy clothes, a woman barrister told a court yesterday.

Jacqueline Samuel spoke out during a case against a former security chief, who was at the centre of allegations that a store's cameras were used secretly to film the Princess of Wales. The footage was reported to have included lingering close-ups of her cleavage and legs.

"If a member of the public, whether royal or not, is willing to go into a public place in low cleavage, it is behaviour which anyone takes a picture," Jacqueline Samuel told a judge at Southwark Crown Court.

She made her comments during a hearing at which she was prosecuting Gary Archer, the former head of security at Harvey Nichols, who was accused of stealing two walkie-talkies, two rugs, a tapestry and a footstool from the Knightsbridge store.

The Recorder Desmond Browne, QC, dismissed the charges against Mr Archer,

36, of North Petherton, Somerset, after more than a day of legal argument.

The Princess was said to have been secretly filmed as she shopped at Harvey Nichols and as she met her friend Christopher Wholey in a cafe. Miss Samuel argued that the allegations concerning Mr Archer would not prejudice his trial on the two theft charges: "It is no offence at all to take videos of people who wear low-neck dresses in public places. Princess Diana was in a public place. I think criticism of a person who took a video would be unfounded."

Kathryn Brown, deputy editor of the women's magazine *Elle*, criticised the barrister's remarks. "Women should wear whatever clothes they want. It shouldn't be anybody's place to take a picture of them just because they are wearing a low top. Princess Diana doesn't wear overtly sexy clothes. She always dresses very appropriately for her position."

A spokeswoman for the Princess said: "The only point we would make is that Her Royal Highness never complained. It may be that other

people took it upon themselves to complain on her behalf."

The judge dismissed the charges after being told by Mark Milliken-Smith, for the defence, that Mr Archer's partner, Susan Archer, appeared to have instigated the charges after an acrimonious separation. It was also possible, the court was told, that Mrs Archer, a prosecution witness, had sold the story of the secret videos to a newspaper as part of her campaign against her husband.

The judge said the possibility of a prosecution witness having instigated the charges could be prejudicial to the trial. The time lapse between the rug theft in 1993 and the date when Mr Archer was charged meant that he was unable to trace a vital defence witness. "I have come to the conclusion that it would be wrong to allow proceedings to continue," the judge said.

Mr Archer, who was made redundant by the store in August 1994, refused to comment after the hearing. Miss Samuel later said that her comments during the case were "legal argument" and not necessarily her view.

## Snap poll fear makes Lib-Dems trim plans

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

SENIOR Liberal Democrats are being forced to cut back their "wish list" of manifesto commitments as the party tries to control its spending plans. Urgent meetings are being held to modify some spending proposals in readiness for the possibility of a snap general election.

Education, health and employment policies will suffer some of the cuts ordered by Malcolm Bruce, the party's Treasury spokesman, ahead of next month's party conference.

Even the party's proposed overseas aid budget, a long-standing hallmark of past election manifestos, is to be shaved. The cutting back of some "pet projects" is designed to make sure that other key pledges remain intact. The party wants to retain its proposal to pump £2 billion into education, if necessary by raising income tax by 1p, removing 750,000 low earners from tax altogether and to 3,000 more policemen.

It also remains committed to reducing vehicle excise duty to £10 on cars under 1400cc and to introducing incentives to employers offering jobs to the unemployed. Free eye and dental checks are also sacrosanct.

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# Navvies go back to class to fill the holes in their education



Roadmending will need brains as well as brawn

By PAUL WILKINSON

DIGGING up the road is no longer a matter of slogging up a few cones, taping off a lane and sitting back to watch the traffic pile up. The navvies of tomorrow will need a certificate to say they know just how to swing a pick.

The Road and Streetworks Act 1991, which comes into effect next August, means that even the humblest labourer should have a piece of paper saying he is competent to dig his hole. It makes it an offence, carrying a hefty fine, and probably blacklisting in the industry, to run a road gang without at least one member of the gang holding a City and

Guilds certificate of competence in roadworks. Eventually all are likely to need them.

In an attempt to beat the deadline, an estimated 150,000 labourers are queuing to attend one of up to 80 courses which will teach them about health and safety regulations, legal requirements for excavations, how to use plans and equipment to find or avoid buried cables and pipes and even how to dig a hole correctly, leaving the site as if it had never been touched.

"The days of the uneducated labourer are numbered," said Stephen Fisher, a former senior technician with the old South Yorkshire County Council highways depart-

ment, who has set up his own training scheme. "The industry still needs fit young men, but all the hard work is done by machines these days. A young bloke with a mini-digger can do a tremendous amount of work in a day; he can also do an awful amount of damage. I have seen whole estates with their power or water cut off because someone has dug in the wrong place."

"In many cases it is teaching grandmothers to suck eggs, but frequently people who think they know it all find they have been taught wrongly. It is quite a culture shock for someone of 50 or 60 who has been on the roads all his life to

have to go back to the classroom. Some cannot read and some have been physically sick at the prospect, but many are self-employed and without the certificate they are out of work."

Mr Fisher's firm Utilities Training (Northern) at Wakefield, west Yorkshire, has got its own 200-yard section of road for students to practise on. "This has been coming for several years, but frankly not everybody has cottoned on. Not everyone will be ready by next August."

Mr Fisher has a wry smile for suggestions that his school is all about learning to lean on a shovel, tea-brewing and digging a hole

before leaving it unattended for a couple of days. "The days of builder's bum, wolf whistles for pretty girls and workers dressed like slobbers are numbered," he said.

"It is not part of our course, but companies are realising that their image is harmed by the prospect of a road gang turning up at 6am looking like they have just fallen out of the pub. These days site workers will be neatly dressed with hard hats and high-visibility jackets and even clean-shaven. Soon they will be skilled in dealing politely with the public."

John Ralph, a site foreman who has completed the course, said: "A lot of the things are day-to-day

practices, but it has drawn my attention to the amount of detail we will have to look at."

Paul Watter, head of roads and transport policy with the AA, said: "We are firmly behind this. Some time ago we carried out our own survey of roadworks and found that at least one third were badly placed, signed or sited. It is short-term works that are the worst."

"You often see potholes being filled off the back of a lorry and then just rolled over with the vehicle's wheels. A number of serious incidents can be traced back to poorly executed roadworks and we feel there should be some level of accountability."

## WPC told to quit after stepping in to help battered wife

By TIM JONES

A SPECIAL constable who used her warrant card to help a penniless neighbour to obtain benefit for food and electricity has been told to resign from the Metropolitan Police. Bernadette Pugh says that she will refuse to leave voluntarily and claims that she has been treated unfairly.

She said last night: "Hell will freeze over before I resign. I will fight this as hard as I can. I am being punished for showing compassion." If she fails to resign, her local commander will ask the Commissioner, Sir Paul Condon, to dismiss her.

Ms Pugh said that she intended to contest the decision of the divisional internal inquiry by appealing directly to Sir Paul. If that failed she would take her case to the Home Secretary. "Those are the only courses open to me, but I believe they will listen to me on humanitarian grounds."

Ms Pugh, 31, a mother of two children, was suspended ten months ago after helping a 21-year-old battered wife to obtain money from the DSS office in Enfield, north London. The police accept that she acted in good faith to help a neighbour in need, but say it was "not necessary or right to abuse her warrant of authority as a constable in this matter."

She went into the DSS office while off duty and wearing civilian clothes and produced her warrant card to facilitate a meeting between the neigh-

bour and a senior manager. She said: "The woman, whom I knew slightly, knocked on my door and told me she was desperate, cold and starving and without money to buy food or charge her electricity key. She had a very young child and feared for her well-being."

She told Ms Pugh that she had been the victim of a violent husband and had been rehoused in a nearby council flat after being given refuge in a home for battered women. "She told me she was so desperate that, unless she obtained benefit, she would commit a crime and steal food. I knew I could not see her and her little girl starve or freeze."

### Compensation plea rejected

A former police officer who was shot and seriously wounded while on duty has been refused compensation by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

Keith Bottomley, 33, was a probationary officer with Suffolk Constabulary in July 1992 when he was hit in the chest and arm. He returned to work but was dismissed in September 1993 and told he was "not of the right character". His claim for compensation failed because his superiors did not link the dismissal to the shooting.

and I did not want desperation to drive her to a criminal act. So I went with her to the DSS office and showed my warrant card to the security man who ushered us through to see a woman in charge. After she got the money she gave me a big hug."

She said that she immediately informed her superior of what she had done. "I was summoned to a disciplinary hearing and told that I had misused my warrant card. I thought that would be the end of it but then, because of a complaint from the DSS office, I was suspended."

She added: "Part of our code of conduct is to promise to show compassion and that is exactly what I did. I believe I have been treated very harshly and unfairly. If I had apprehended a mugger or thief they would not have cared whether I was off duty or not."

A statement issued on behalf of the Metropolitan Police said: "We expect special constables to work to the same high standards that we expect from regular serving police officers and this includes making proper and authorised use of their warrant card."

The statement said that Ms Pugh had agreed initially to attend a meeting last Thursday with the commander of Enfield division but had then refused to go. "A letter from the divisional manager has been sent to the special constable requesting her to resign and we await her reply."



Bernadette Pugh says that "hell will freeze over" before she resigns voluntarily

## Schoolgirl was killed by local, police believe

By ADRIAN LEE

THE naked body of a missing teenager has been found in a cornfield two weeks after she disappeared. Detectives said that the killer of Sarah Bottomley probably came from the surrounding area.

Yesterday the 14-year-old's father made an appeal for help as police began questioning residents in and around the market town of Oakham, Leicestershire, where the victim lived. Her body was found five miles away, near the village of Edmondthorpe, which has a population of 80.

A man walking his dog found the body, which had been crudely hidden beneath a hedgerow, but it is not yet known how the teenager died. Sarah, who lived with her father Mark, 37, a factory worker, brother Daniel, 15, and sister Victoria, 10, was last seen by her family on August 5. She was not reported missing for two days because her father assumed she had gone to visit her mother, Carol, 34, who lives in Wymondham.

There is a lane alongside the field where Sarah's body was found early on Monday, and she may have been killed elsewhere. She had recently camped near by with friends. Sarah was seen with a group of youths in Oakham on the evening of August 5. It is not known where she spent the night but she was seen again in the town next day.

Detective Superintendent Ian Stripp said there was "every indication the answer to what has happened does lie here in the local community. The case will be solved with local information." The body

was decomposed and may have been in the field for a week, he said. Sarah was identified by her jewellery.

Her father broke down as he spoke of her. "She was a very happy, lively girl who had many friends and knew a lot of people in Oakham. Someone, somewhere, knows where she has been and who she has been with. Someone knows something and I want them to help the police find who did this to Sarah."

He telephoned Sarah's mother, from whom he is separated, when he became worried about their daughter. Sarah made regular taxi trips to see her mother and the lane off which the body was found led to her mother's village.

Detectives were also searching for Sarah's clothing. The girl, who was a fan of rave music, was wearing different outfits on the last two occasions on which she was seen and it is thought that she may have changed at a friend's home.



Sarah Bottomley: went missing two weeks ago

## Briton held on bomb charge

FROM LENNART UTTERSTROM IN STOCKHOLM

A MAN from London was remanded in custody by a Swedish court yesterday after allegedly being caught carrying a home-made nail bomb at an anti-Nazi protest in the southwest of the country.

David Thomas, who will face trial in two weeks, was one of seven people arrested on Saturday when a demonstration by neo-Nazis in Trollhattan to commemorate the anniversary of Rudolf Hess's death erupted into violent clashes between neo-Nazis and anti-fascists.

Mr Thomas, 34, was charged with possessing a weapon with intent to harm, police said. The other six people arrested had been released. Thomas Wennerstrand, the chief prosecutor, said that Mr Thomas admitted making the bomb but denied planning to use it against the neo-Nazis.

## Shipping lane rescue ends rum day out for Whiskey

By EMMA WILKINS

THE astonished crew of a passenger ferry called in rescue services after they saw a two-year-old golden retriever swimming in busy shipping lanes four miles out at sea.

Whiskey had been playing with his owner on a beach near Gosport, Hampshire, when a strong current swept him out to sea. As Douglas Cadle shouted for his pet to return to shore, the dog started swimming towards the Isle of Wight.

Ian Blaxman, the captain of a small passenger ferry, was keeping lookout when he saw the dog's head 100 yards away from his boat. Mr Blaxman and Chris Quinton, a crewman, jumped into the water but Whiskey was too heavy to lift on to the ferry's high decks.

At one point they managed to climb up the ladder on the side of their boat with Whiskey, but a wave knocked them back into the sea. The men

spent 20 minutes keeping the dog afloat as another crewman called the Coastguard, who summoned a Ministry of Defence police launch with lower decks.

Mr Blaxman said that Whiskey was in an anxious state by the time it was eventually hauled aboard. "He scratched us to bits but



Whiskey safe on dry land after his ordeal

you can't blame the dog because he was getting very tired and distressed."

The rescue, on Monday afternoon, was completed when MoD police managed to haul the dog aboard their launch and return to shore. Whiskey was examined by a vet and found to be tired but unharmed.

Mr Cadle, who lives in Alverstoke, Hampshire, said: "Whiskey was delighted to be reunited with his brother, Ginger. He likes to swim although he has never gone quite that far before. I'm not sure how keen he will be to get into the water now."

Mr Cadle said that Whiskey had ignored his shouts and appeared to think that the Isle of Wight was Gosport beach. "He became disorientated and distressed as the current started taking him away from the shore. It looked as though he was paddling to the Isle of Wight."

## Foraging children in care

By AUDREY MAGEE

FOUR children were in care last night after neighbours reported seeing the eldest foraging for food in dustbins while the mother was away.

It was claimed that three boys and a girl, aged from ten months to four years, had been left in the care of drunken youths at the council house in Ardoyne, Belfast. The 20-year-old mother was said to be at a party. Police wore face masks against the stench of conditions in the house when they went to retrieve the children.

The family had been receiving visits from social welfare since moving to the house three months ago. Yesterday the social services held an emergency internal meeting after a call to discuss the case.

The mother denied neglecting her family, and said she had been out shopping. She told BBC Radio Ulster: "Somebody wrecked the house. It was spotless when I left it."

## Teacher jailed after school gave him second chance

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

A SCIENCE teacher was jailed for a year yesterday after being convicted of sexual assaults on pupils which happened after governors decided not to sack him for an earlier incident.

Christopher Keeton, head of chemistry at North Chadderton High School, near Oldham, Greater Manchester, continued to grope girls after governors gave him a second chance when he was caught trying to kiss a 16-year-old pupil four years ago. The 32-year-old was found guilty after a six-day trial at Manchester Crown Court of seven attacks on four different girls at the school.

Oldham council yesterday defended the school's actions, saying that the decision in 1992 to give him another chance while banning him from being alone with girl pupils was based on all available evidence at the time about a seemingly isolated incident.

Judge Harold Singer said Keeton had been "arrogant and bold" in defying the ban. "The horror that must rise in the minds of any parents of young girls must be measureless. You gratified your lust and you did so on school premises," he said.

He added: "Not only did you indecently assault young girls, you did so in classrooms, running the risk that someone might have come in." He said that Keeton, who had been at the 1,450-pupil mixed comprehensive school since 1986, was on the evidence a fine teacher who greatly enjoyed teaching.

However, six of the assaults came after the school gave Keeton a final written warning for kissing a girl on the lips after a lesson in 1992. He was charged with this assault after being suspended in July 1995 when the other incidents came to light.

One of the girls wept as she told the court how Keeton

persistently touched her indecently, saying: "I don't know why I like you so much." She told the jury: "At first I thought I could handle it by ignoring him. But eventually he really frightened me."

Keeton's wife, Bernadette, watched from the public gallery as the judge said that the case was a "multifaceted tragedy" for all concerned.

Mike Willis, director of education and leisure in Oldham, yesterday said that he was completely satisfied that the school governors worked "correctly and sensitively" in handling the allegations. "The school, working in conjunction with the local authority, moved swiftly to protect the welfare of pupils as soon as the allegations were made against him."

He said Keeton was given a final written warning rather than the sack in 1992 because there was only a single allegation of indecent behaviour.

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**BY NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT**

In 1994, the proposed limits for nitrogen dioxide (see

He said there was evidence that catalytic converters on vehicle exhausts, designed to reduce nitrogen dioxide, were not proving as effective as

"This cost-benefit analysis essentially puts the British economy before public health. Clean air is a right which should not be subject to this kind of economic test," said Mr Bosworth.

**Leading article, page 15**

**By JEREMY LAURANCE**  
**HEALTH CORRESPONDENT**

The Liberal Democrats say that new figures show the cost of NHS prescriptions for asthma has risen 67 per cent in six years, from £245 million in 1990 to £410 million in 1995, equivalent to £8.60 for every man, woman and child. Prescriptions for asthma have risen from 19 million to 34 million since 1985. The figures, obtained in a written

Mr Hughes said a two-pronged strategy to cut traffic pollution and reduce smoking was required. "We must reduce vehicle journeys and

reduce pollution from vehicles. If we have more public transport, the numbers polluting the roads will be less. About half of asthma sufferers also find their asthma is made worse by smoking. I am not saying pollution causes asthma – no one knows the cause and we need more research – but it is medically accepted that pollution triggers asthma symptoms."

The complex relationship between pollution and asthma was illustrated by regional tables provided by the Liberal Democrats that showed smog-bound London has the lowest per capita spend on anti-asthma drugs.

The amount spent on asthma drugs in Croydon, south London – £5.80 a head – is half that spent in Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and the Isle of Wight, which all have a figure over £10.

The National Asthma Campaign said research showed asthma levels in rural areas were as high as in cities. A spokeswoman said: "There is certainly more to asthma than pollution. We eat more processed foods and live in centrally-heated, carpeted, closed-off homes. We spend 90 per cent of our time indoors and indoor pollution by agents such as house dust mites is now under the microscope."

THE spokesman for the National Asthma Campaign is adamant: "It is wrong to imply that asthma is caused by air pollution; although pollution certainly exacerbates its symptoms in people who already suffer from it. There is, however, some evidence of a modest relationship between local traffic density and the prevalence of

those who live among the hills of Skye is much the same as it is in some of our inner cities. It is not known why.

Other aspects of modern living must be considered. *Suspicion has been cast on the comforts provided by the warm centrally heated house, with wall-to-wall carpeting, the perfect haven for the microscopic house mite, a potent trigger, possibly even a cause, of asthma.* However, take away decent heating and upper respiratory infections, coughs and a cold, for they too can precipitate an attack of wheezing.

The relationship of stress to asthma is also ill-defined. It is all too easy to relate a severe attack of asthma to a blazing family row, but what about recurrent minor attacks of wheezing? Could they be caused by family tensions stemming from modern life?

A link has even been sug-

gested between the rise in working mothers and asthma. Is a relaxed, united home life as good a defence against asthma as freedom from car fumes?

Whatever the causes, asthma needs much more research. A British Lung Foundation study published this year showed that between 30 to 50 percent of the under-fives in the United Kingdom suffer acute asthma and wheezing.

Asthma is too serious and too complex a problem to be used as an easy weapon in any war between car owners and the green movement. Nobody denies that pollution must be reduced to ease the life of those who have asthma, but a greater need is to find out why they developed it in the first place.

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## THE AIR WE BREATHE AND THE HARM IT DOES

## PARTICLES

Tiny flecks of soot coated in hazardous chemicals  
Health risk linked with heart attacks, breathing difficulties, asthma  
Source: diesel vehicles, barbecues, fireworks parties, tyres wearing on roads  
Current health guidelines: none  
New government target: 50 micrograms/cubic metre over 24 hours. Exceeds target more than 20 days a year  
Action: tighter controls on emissions from lorries, buses and other diesel vehicles


## OZONE

**A** colourless, odourless gas formed in bright sunlight from fumes.  
**Health risk:** linked with breathing difficulties, asthma and lung damage  
**Source:** car fumes, dry cleaners, paint and chemical companies  
**Current health guidelines:** 50ppb averaged over 8 hours  
**New government target:** 50ppb averaged over 8 hours  
**Exceeds new target:** around 80 days a year.  
**Action:** reduce car usage, tighter exhaust emissions, European agreement on industrial emissions.

## BENZENE

**A hydrocarbon in petrol before it is burnt**  
**Health risk:** causes cancer and leukaemia  
**Source:** all vehicles, refineries and petrol stations  
**Current health guidelines:** none  
**New government target:** 5ppb averaged over a year  
**Exceeds target occasionally**  
**Action:** tighter controls on petrol to stop forecourt leakages, better exhaust control

## CARBON MONOXIDE



A colourless gas produced in vehicle exhaust  
**Health risk:** linked with lethargy and dizziness  
 Can kill in high concentration  
**Current health guidelines:** 10ppb averaged over 8 hours  
**New government target:** 10ppb averaged over 8 hours  
 Exceeds target occasionally.  
**Action:** reduce car usage, tighter controls

## SULPHUR DIOXIDE

**A gas produced by burning petrol and coal at power stations**  
**Health risk:** linked with breathing difficulties  
**Current health guideline:** 175ppb averaged over 10 minutes  
**New government target:** 100ppb averaged over 15 minutes  
**Exceeds target about 25 days a year**  
**Action:** reduce fumes from power stations and encourage use of low-sulphur car fuels available in Scandinavia

### 1,3 BUTADIEN

**A hydrocarbon solvent found in petrol and diesel**  
**Health risk:** causes leukaemia and lymphoma  
**Current health guidelines:** none  
**New government target:** 1ppb averaged over the year  
**Exceeds target rarely**  
**Action:** low levels mean this is a low priority

## NITROGEN DIOXIDE

**Found in exhaust fumes of cars and forries, forms smog in bright sunshine**  
**Health risk:** linked with breathing difficulties and asthma  
**Current health guidelines:** 210ppb averaged over an hour  
**New government targets:** 104.6ppb averaged over an hour  
**Exceeds target up to 50 days a year.**  
**Action:** reducing car usage particularly for short journeys

**LEAD**

**A heavy metal found in fuels but extracted from many petrols**  
**Health risks:** poisons the brain and can damage children's intelligence  
**Current health guidelines:** 1 micrograms per cubic metre averaged annually  
**New government target:** 0.5 micrograms per cubic metre averaged annually  
**Exceeds target,** no information available  
**Action:** the dramatic take-up in lead-free petrol is reducing the risk


[illegible]

THE spokesman for the National Asthma Campaign is adamant: "It is wrong to imply that asthma is caused by air pollution; although pollution certainly exacerbates its symptoms in people who already suffer from it. There is, however, some evidence of a modest relationship between local traffic density and the prevalence of asthma."

The truth is that, as in so many aspects of medicine, the doctors don't know all the answers. It is a mystery why there is an epidemic of asthma, and why the number of children who suffer from it has doubled since the 1970s.

We do, however, know that if we put children who are troubled with asthma into a smoky, grimy, exhaust-ridden atmosphere, any cough of wheeze will be made worse, and we also know that this environment can induce an attack in somebody who is vulnerable to asthma but whose symptoms were previously quiescent.

In Britain the relationship between traffic pollution and asthma is uncertain, for research has shown that the incidence of asthma among



## MEDICAL BRIEFING

those who live among the hills of Skye was much the same as it is in some of our inner cities. It is not known why.

Other aspects of modern living must be considered: suspicion has been cast on the comforts provided by the warm centrally heated house with wall-to-wall carpeting, the perfect haven for the microscopic house mite, a potent trigger, possibly even a cause, of asthma. However, take away decent heating and upper respiratory infections, coughs and colds become more of a menace, for they too can precipitate an attack of wheezing.

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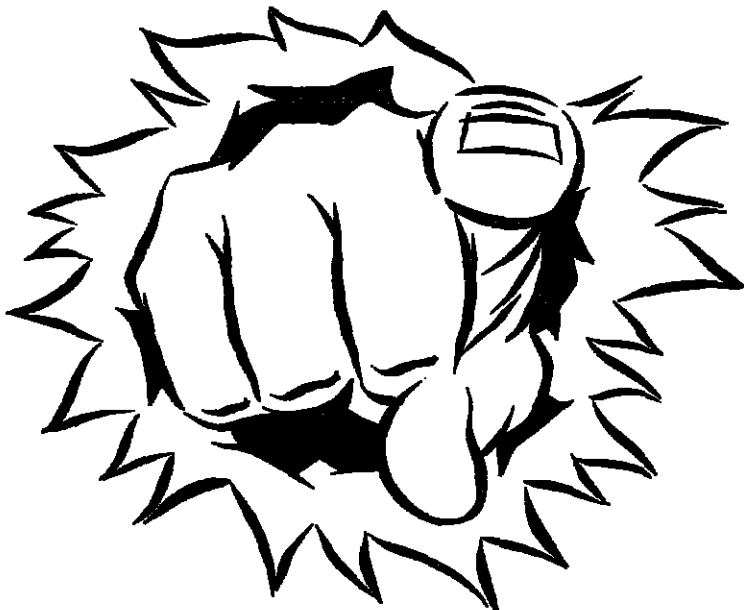
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# Wife takes graphic revenge on firm that fired husband

BY KATHRYN KNIGHT

A DIAMOND sorter dismissed after being wrongly accused of theft had his revenge yesterday when his wife stood outside De Beers' London headquarters with a huge poster of her husband in a graduation gown emblazoned with the words "Here's justice, De Beers!"

Cheryl Newby chose the day when buyers come from around the world to reveal that her husband, Neil, 49, inspired by his legal battles with the company, had graduated in law last month, 4½ years after he was sacked.

Mr Newby had worked for De Beers for 25 years when he was accused of stealing two diamonds from the sorting floor. Although no evidence was offered against him, the company, whose London office handles 85 per cent of the world's rough diamonds, refused to re-employ him.

He nearly lost his house and his health in a three-year fight

to clear his name. Mrs Newby said that her gesture had been well-supported: "People from the company; passers-by and merchants coming to view the diamonds have all come up to ask me what it's all about. When I tell them, they have all said good on us."

"Some workers have been too scared to be seen coming up to the van but have given me thumbs-up signs from the side of the road or from their windows. I wanted to show them there was life after De Beers."

In Maidenhead, Berkshire, where the couple live with their two children, Mr Newby said that his dealings with De Beers had nearly broken him. He said that he had been arrested and dismissed within hours, with no opportunity to defend himself.

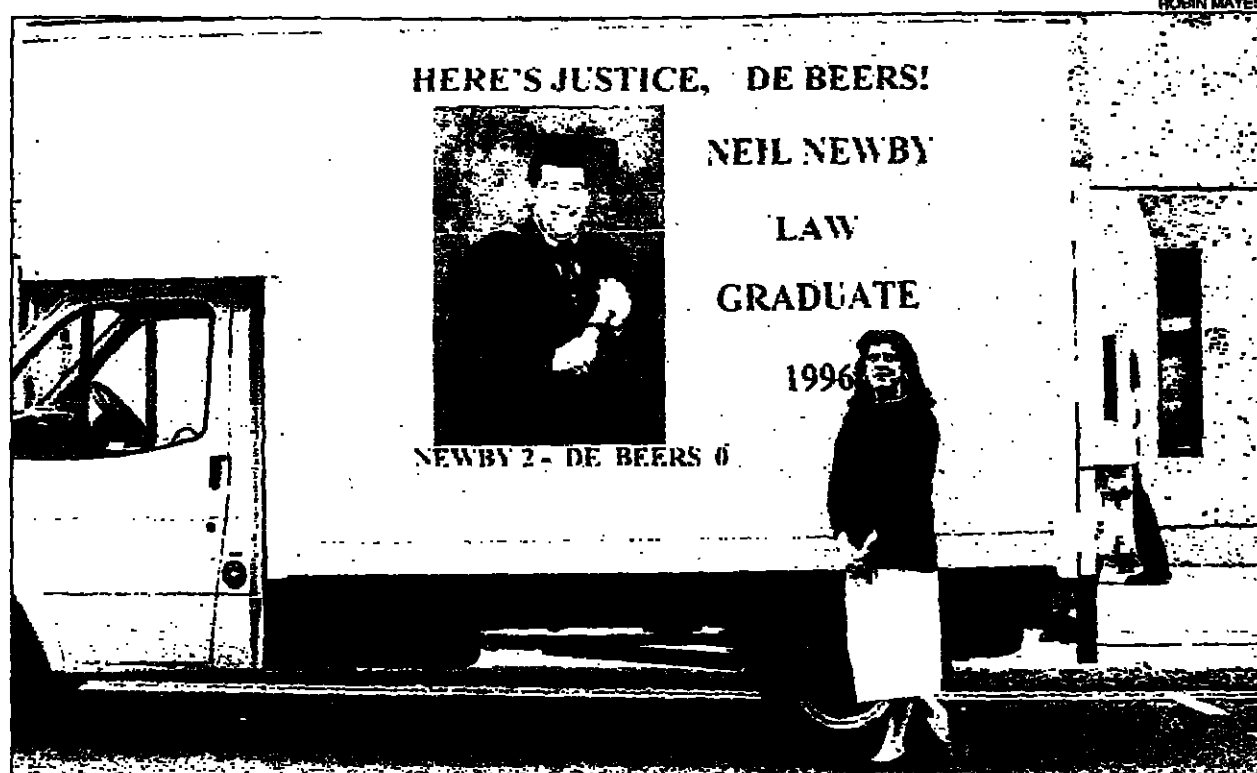
He worked as a quality controller in the diamond sorting department and had travelled the world with the

company, spending time in Botswana, South Africa, Zaire and Belgium.

"One morning in January 1992, I arrived at work and was immediately arrested for stealing diamonds. I was given no chance to explain or defend myself," he said. Only a week earlier he had been sent a letter about his forthcoming 25 years' service, telling him that he was entitled to a gift worth £500.

After questioning, Mr Newby was released on bail and immediately dismissed from the company. The case came before Clerkenwell magistrates in February 1992, but all charges were dropped after the Crown offered no evidence.

"I was taken back on at De Beers under suspension and subjected to further investigations, then I was dismissed again in May 1992. I was told that they had conducted a thorough investigation and



Cheryl Newby with the poster displayed on a van at De Beers. She chose the day when buyers visit the firm

they still had reason to believe I was guilty of theft of a diamond," he said.

"I felt that after all the years I had given them they were quite happy to destroy the lives of an innocent man and his family rather than back down. I decided there was nothing else I could do other than fight. I had developed a stammer, I was close to a

nervous breakdown and was close to losing everything I had worked for."

Mr Newby said that De Beers called in his company mortgage the day after he was dismissed. When his solicitor objected, they raised the interest rates from the favourable company rates. "My mother had to step in to pay our mortgage. Without her and

the rest of my family's financial support, we would have lost the house and gone under. As it is we still have huge debts."

Mr Newby took De Beers to a tribunal, claiming unfair dismissal. Two years later, the panel found in his favour and he was awarded £10,500 compensation with half his costs.

"It was the classic case of the little man against the giant, and in many ways I haven't won. We are still in debt and I have had to battle to rebuild my life," Mr Newby said. "My wife and I just wanted to show people that the big guys don't always break you."

A spokesman for De Beers said: "Neil Newby used to work for us. He does not work for us anymore."

SATURDAY IN THE TIMES



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## Internet groom has child-sex conviction

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

A MAN who wooed his American bride over the Internet is a convicted child-sex offender. Adrian Philpott married Cindy Irish, a mother-of-four from Connecticut, in Aberdeen on Monday, just three days after the couple met for the first time.

Mr Philpott's conviction has placed a question mark over their plans to set up home together in the United States. He was sentenced to three years in prison at Exeter Crown Court in June 1990 for sexual intercourse with a girl.

The newlyweds had planned to fly to the US after a week in the Highlands. However, a spokeswoman at the American Consulate said: "Anyone convicted of a criminal offence of moral turpitude is ineligible for a visa." He would have to apply for a waiver, which could take more than a month.

At the wedding reception Mr Philpott, 42, said that his bride was aware of the offence and had forgiven him. He added that he had found God in prison. "It happened at a time of great stress in my life and I had an affair with a young girl," he said. His bride, a widow, has children aged 14 to 27.

## Hunt for missing children extended

BY STEPHEN FARRELL

THE parents of two children missing on a Norfolk beach were last night reconciling themselves to the thought that they may never see them again, police said.

Hopes faded of finding alive Jodi Loughlin, 6, and her brother Tom, 4, after the police search entered a third day. The search is to be extended today two miles inland from Holme next the Sea and Ringstead, with a helicopter using thermal-imaging cameras.

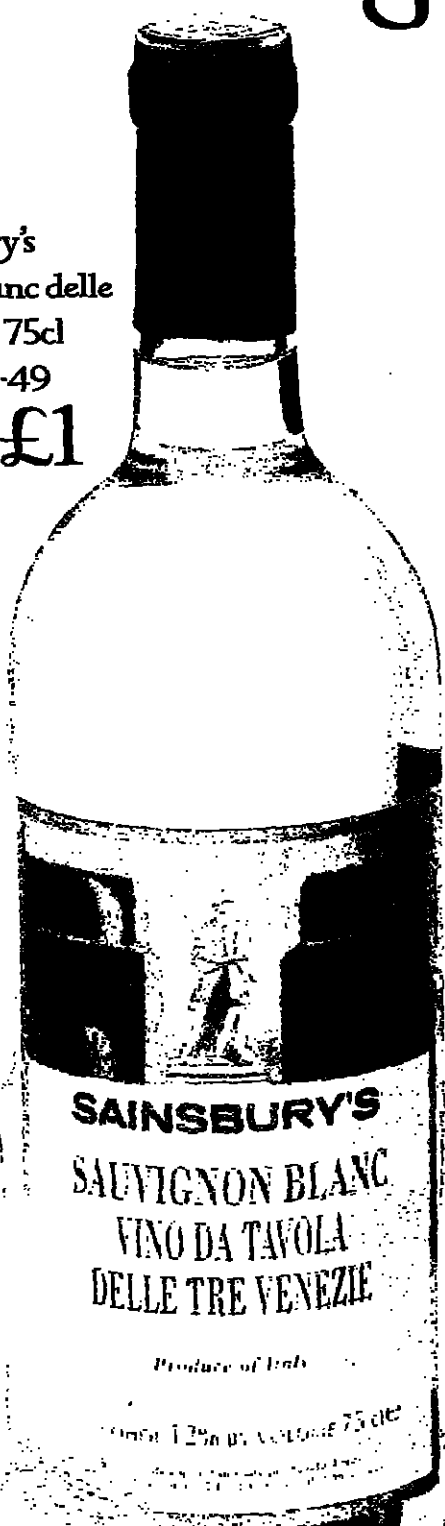
Fears are growing that the children were swept out to sea after excitedly running into the surf at the start of their holiday on Sunday. Coastguards said yesterday that the bodies of the children may never be found.

Superintendent John Hale paid tribute to the fortitude of the parents, Kevin Loughlin, 37, and Lynette Thornton, 37, from Norwood, south London. "They are really hit by the reality of the situation. They are very distressed this morning," he said. "They have held up with tremendous fortitude but there is only so much people can take and they are clearly suffering. They didn't even have a chance to say goodbye."



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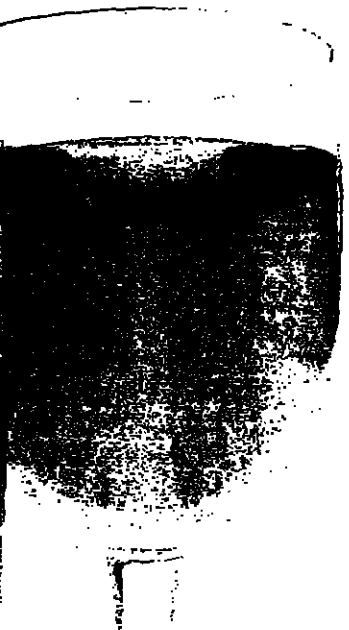
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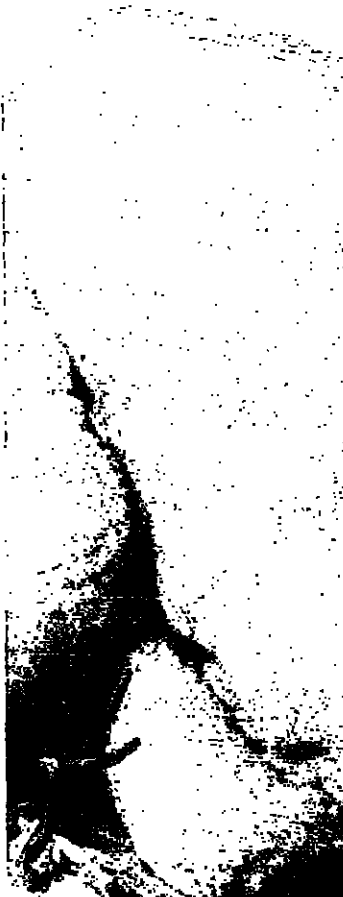
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# Court backs residents in fight against bail hostel

By LIN JENKINS

OPPONENTS of development in residential areas claimed a victory yesterday when a judge ruled that planners could be expected to take fear into account as a factor in the quality of life.

Residents had opposed the expansion of a bail hostel in Aldridge, West Midlands. Their success in the High Court in London was attacked as a victory for the so-called "Nimby tendency" — not in our back yard — enabling a wider argument to block hostels or even affordable housing from the more pleasant estates.

The West Midlands probation committee had appealed against a decision by planners not to allow the hostel to increase its occupancy from 12 to 20. Expansion had been refused on the basis of reports from residents, many of them elderly, that there had been incidents of loutish and drunken behaviour and an increase in crime.

The hostel is next door to a home for 80 elderly people. A quarter of the local population is over retirement age.

Deputy Judge Robin Purchas said: "I believe that many members of the public would be surprised, and would feel that something was wrong, if fear in a community was not capable in an appropriate case of being lawfully considered in determining whether or not development should proceed. It is a truism that residential areas may differ. Villages will differ from towns. Suburbs may differ from residential developments within urban centres."

"In this case the inspector concluded on the evidence that this residential development would suffer particular detriment as a result of apprehension and fear, due to the contrasting lifestyles of those likely to occupy the hostel and the estate."

Sheila Healy, director of environment at Walsall council, said: "This is something of

precedent. We are very pleased that the court has sided with us. We feel that crime and the fear of crime are important in people's lives in terms of where they live, and it is important that their views are considered valid."

The council turned down the planning application in January 1995. Its decision was upheld by a government inspector after a public inquiry when he agreed that the grounds for refusal were allowed under existing planning law.

The probation service argued that the council was in breach of planning rules by giving in to "subjective and unsubstantiated fears" that an increase in numbers would lead to an increase in crime. Barrie Bridgman, the West Midlands assistant chief probation officer, had condemned the inspector's decision as a dangerous precedent. He said it could have "a disastrous impact on the possibility of opening hostels anywhere in the country for defendants, offenders or any other class of citizen that people take objection to".

Robert Griffiths, QC, for the probation committee, said that, if the planning inspector was right, then the result could be a nationwide ban on bail hostels, or even affordable housing, from "nice" residential areas.

Residents had complained about confrontations with hostel occupants, several robberies and car break-ins. They said that the inmates fought with each other, bared their buttocks at a bedroom window and smashed milk bottles in driveways. The residents also said that they had little faith in the people who were running the hostel.

The inspector said in December 1995 that it was hard to imagine a more incongruous juxtaposition than that between the bail hostel and the "neat" housing estate adjoining it.



The 12th-century casket believed to have held a relic of St Thomas à Becket went on public display at the Victoria & Albert Museum yesterday after being saved from export by an appeal led by the National Art Collections Fund. It is regarded as the finest surviving example of its kind, with decoration chronicling Becket's martyrdom and burial. It is on view in the museum's medieval treasury, near the main entrance

## Ramblers criticise slow pace of millennium path clean-up

By RICHARD DUCE

A MILLENNIUM dream for every public footpath to be cleared is unlikely to be realised by the Government, according to figures released by the Ramblers' Association yesterday.

The Countryside Commission, acting as agent for the Government, promised in 1987 that all 140,000 miles of public path and bridleway would be cleared by 2000. An estimated 40,000 miles of paths are still obstructed by barbed wire, crops or legal dispute, the Ramblers' Association said yesterday at the launch of its Free Your Paths campaign.

The campaign concentrates on six areas in which the association says that councils are not doing enough to meet the millennium target: Wexmore, Somerset; Harlow, Es-

sex; Stafford; Cardiff; Hopton, west Yorkshire; and Gorebridge, Lothian.

Councils have the power, under the 1990 Rights of Way Act, to fine farmers and landowners up to £1,000 for failing to comply with orders to clear paths. Kate Ashbrook, chairman of the Ramblers' Association, which has 116,000 members, said: "Parliament has given county councils and unitary authorities the duty to enforce the law: they have been appointed as the policemen of the paths. But too often they fall asleep on the job."

Tony Gover, of the association's Somerset branch, said that half of the 110 paths in Wexmore were obstructed when surveyed five years ago and there were only two signposts where there should have been 200. "We reported

all this to Somerset County Council and Sedgemoor District Council, which is employed by the county as its agent. Most of the paths are still obstructed. In Sedgemoor they reckon that it will be another 40 years before all the paths are signposted and 70 years before the footpath surfaces are put in good order."

The Countryside Commission accepted that the 2000 target could be optimistic but said that the number of paths now fully open to the public was nearly 75 per cent. Richard Stinson, the commission's chairman, said that there had been a huge improvement in recent years, but added: "We have to be realistic and appreciate that local authorities have other priorities in these times of reduced public spending."

## Thinking about sex can overcome pain

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

THINKING about sex or other positive things can halve the sensation of pain, according to an experiment in the United States. Thinking negatively, however, makes it worse.

The experiment was carried out by Dr Peter Staats, Director of Pain Medicine at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. With colleagues from the University of Wisconsin, he persuaded 72 people to hold their hands in ice water for as long as they could bear while thinking either positive or negative thoughts.

The volunteers were also assessed for their anxiety about pain in a written test. The results showed that those who were fearful removed their hands from the ice water much sooner than others, but the pain tolerance of both groups was increased by

positive thinking. "These findings support our belief that most pain involves both a biological cause and the emotional response to it, and that treatment should address both factors," Dr Staats told the Eighth World Congress on Pain in Vancouver.

He told volunteers in the positive group that ice water made wounds heal more quickly, improved blood flow, strengthened fingernail beds and had other medical benefits. He asked them to repeat words such as "honesty", "health" or "sex".

The negative group was told that ice water was harmful, and repeated words such as "dishonesty", "sickness", "filth" and "sexual abstinence". They perceived pain much sooner and took their hands out twice as quickly.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Inspectors find fault at blood bank

A blood bank has been given a month to rectify "unacceptable" lapses in procedure found by government inspectors. The faults at the East Anglia Blood Centre, based at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, were discovered during a routine visit by inspectors from the Medicines Control Agency. The agency and the National Blood Authority, which runs the blood service, insisted yesterday that the problems were not serious and that there was no risk to health.

#### Cancer concern

Older women are not being screened for breast cancer despite being at highest risk. Age Concern says. Although 66 per cent of breast cancer deaths occur in over-65s, under 2 per cent are screened.

#### Waterless week

The town of Nenagh in Co Tipperary will be without mains water for a week because of suspected industrial pollution. Thousands of households are being supplied by road tankers.

#### Compass found

Divers from St Andrews University have found a compass in a Cromwellian warship sunk off Mull in 1653. Dr Colin Martin called the wreck "a unique time-capsule of the mid-17th century".

#### Malaria move

A Bristol-based law firm, Lawrence Tuckers, has been awarded a legal aid contract to fight for compensation for people who claim serious side-effects from the anti-malarial drug Lariam.

#### Bull terrier shot

A bull terrier was shot dead by police after it went berserk and bit its owner and her son in Warrington, Cheshire. The dog was a cross between a Staffordshire terrier and a pit bull terrier.

#### Chipper fish

A goldfish has survived unscathed in a tank of 100 piranhas at the Sea Life Centre in Scarborough. The goldfish is believed to have been thrown into the display by a visitor as a prank.

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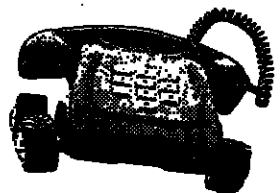
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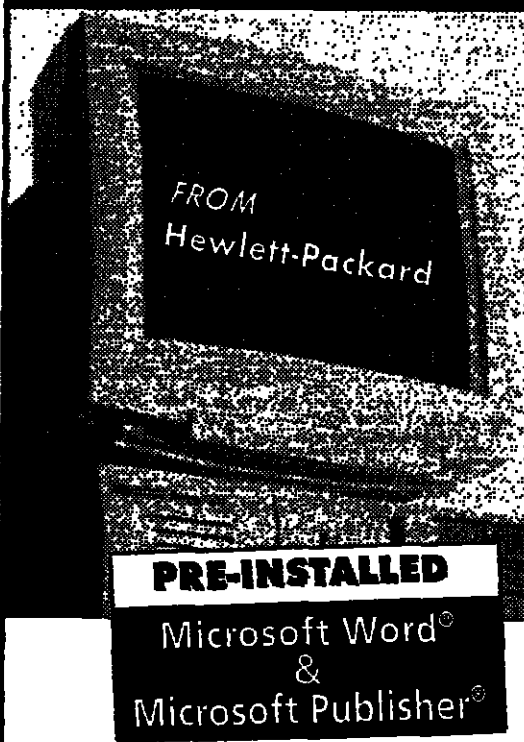
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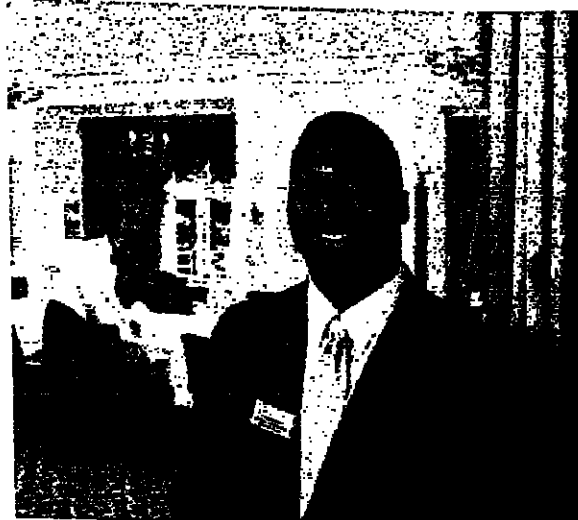


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# Superbean leads shops into battle with gene scientists

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

A NEW soya "superbean" could become the first battle-ground over the genetic modification of food, which offers enormous benefits but also worries some consumers.

Food manufacturers and retailers are divided about how to label food containing the new form of soya, which is expected to hit supermarket shelves this autumn.

The shops want labels saying it has been modified, while the manufacturers say this is impracticable and could be misleading. Potentially, a huge range of products could contain small amounts of soya flour or oil produced from genetically modified plants. They include breads, pastries, vegetable oil, salad dressings, margarine, sweets, cereals,

some drinks and meat products, and chocolate.

Geraldine Schofield of the Food and Drink Federation says that two thirds of products on supermarket shelves contain soya products. Total world production is more than 120 million tons a year.

Most is grown in the United States, which this year planted a genetically modified strain of the plant for the first time. It will be harvested next month and on the world market by October.

The new plants, produced by Monsanto, contain an introduced gene from a bacterium which makes them resistant to the herbicide glyphosate, sold in various forms to farmers and gardeners and best known as the weedkiller

Roundup. The herbicide kills all green plants by blocking a pathway for nutrients. The substitute gene reopens the pathway, enabling the modified plant — called Roundup Ready soya beans — to resist the herbicide. Farmers can spray their crops with Roundup, killing weeds but leaving the soya unaffected. It should make the growing of soya beans easier, cheaper and more profitable.

The beans produced will not be sold as beans, but in a processed form as flour or oil. Professor Derek Burke, chairman of the advisory committee on novel foods and processes, which has given clearance to the new products, says that processing means no trace of the gene, or the enzyme it produces, is present in the final product.

"The flours produced by ordinary soya and the genetically modified form are indistinguishable," he said yesterday.

His committee recommended that the soya products could be sold without special labelling, advice accepted by ministers and repeated by the European Commission. But for earlier genetically modified foods such as the FlavrSavr tomato, sold as pastes and purées, the supermarkets have adopted informative labels.

"Our preference is to label genetically modified products," a spokesman for Sainsbury's said. "We believe customers should have the right to choose."

A spokeswoman for the British Retail Consortium, which represents 90 per cent of the industry, says that it wants consumers to be able to make an informed choice.

"Some of our members have contacted the manufacturers to insist that the genetically modified soya must be identified on the label."

But John Ward, of the federation, said: "Having such a label implies there is a difference in the product, when there isn't. You couldn't enforce or monitor the labels, because there is no determinable difference."



The dummy you don't mind sitting beside you: the papier mâché models will ride trains to Bridlington as part of a community arts project

BY JONATHAN PRYNN  
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

SILENT rail passengers who never complain about delays, ask the way to the buffet or try to strike up conversation are to make an appearance on a seaside branch line.

The "passengers", life-sized papier mâché dummies, are to be placed on trains be-

## The model railway passenger

tween Hull and Bridlington as part of a community arts project. Others will stand or sit at station platforms.

The dummies will ride on the trains from the end of next month. Some will be dressed in period costumes

of the Yorkshire working families who came to Bridlington for their holidays earlier this century.

They will be made in a disused parcel office at Bridlington station. Passengers, tourists and local

people will be encouraged to help to construct them.

Shirley Hester, of the mental health charity MIND, which is involved in the project, said: "We hope that people living all along the line will come to help us

with the sculptures and even people on holiday for a few days would like to try their hand at making an arm or a foot. We hope it will liven up the station and add to the interest of the journey."

Ken Bray, a spokesman for Regional Railways North East, said: "The models will always be accompanied by one or two fare-paying adults."

## Modified foods are here to stay

BY ROBIN YOUNG

SEVERAL genetically modified foods preceded soya on to British supermarket shelves. The Co-op sells its own-brand vegetarian cheese that is manufactured by using a genetically modified enzyme called chymosin. The Co-op was the first supermarket group in Britain to promise customers that they would be told whenever genetic engineering was used, and although there is no trace of the enzyme in the end product, the cheese is labelled as "produced using gene technology".

Genetically modified foods do not have to be labelled, and some other vegetarian cheeses made in the same way as the Co-op's are sold without any indication that genetic engineering has been used.

Both Sainsbury and Sainsbury's sell tomato purées made from tomatoes modified so that the enzyme that causes the fruit to ripen and rot is switched off, delaying softening. The supermarket companies say that the use of the genetically modified Flavr-

Savr tomatoes reduces waste and gives a naturally thicker paste.

Most of the crops that have been approved for release and commercial sale are in North America. The first crop to be cleared for sale in Europe was a herbicide-tolerant tobacco plant. This year the European Union has approved a hybrid oilseed rape that will be grown commercially in Europe, as well as the herbicide-tolerant soybean that will be grown in America. No genetically engineered crops are yet grown commercially in Britain, but food products already cleared for use here include oil from four different types of transgenic oilseed rape.

Sometimes genetic engineering has unexpected and unwelcome results. When a seed company genetically modified soya beans by introducing a brazil nut protein to improve the beans' quality as animal feed, it was found that people who were allergic to brazil nuts were also allergic to the new soya bean.

## Thousands of grouse crash to death on deer fences

BY JOHN VINCENT

THE black grouse shooting season opened yesterday with a warning that the gamebirds' survival is threatened by fences protecting young trees from deer. Their rarer and more magnificent cousin, the capercaillie, is even more seriously affected by the tall wire fences and now faces possible extinction.

Studies by the British Trust for Ornithology show that the area inhabited by black

grouse has shrunk by 28 per cent over the past 25 years. Once common from Scotland to Surrey, black grouse — bigger woodland cousins of the more plentiful moorland red grouse — have dwindled from hundreds of thousands last century to about 35,000, mostly in Scotland. The capercaillie's habitat has shrunk by 64 per cent over the same period and only about 10,000 remain.

Chris Mead, of the trust, estimates that 10,000 or more grouse are killed against deer fences each year, more than a fifth of the population. He said: "These wire fences are essential for protecting newly planted trees and areas for natural regeneration. But they are walls of death as far as black grouse and capercaillie are concerned."

"They fly fast and low and are equipped to blast their way through the outer branches of trees without damage. But

strands of wire and wire netting are a different matter. Overgrazing of their upland habitat by sheep and deer also plays a part, but it has become clear that the fences are responsible for much of the nationwide decline."

Ian Collier, of the Forestry Authority, said: "The real problem is with the deer themselves. A reduction of their numbers to sensible levels would virtually eliminate the damage to young trees as there would be sufficient grazing left on plants the deer prefer to satisfy them."

Although listed as an endangered species, black grouse are shot from August 12 until December 10. Some estates ban the shooting of black grouse and capercaillie. Both species have been shot for centuries and the capercaillie had to be reintroduced from Sweden 150 years ago after being hunted to extinction in about 1785.

## Wasps fly in late after cold spring

BY MICHAEL HORNSBY, COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

WASPS are making a late arrival, just as devotees of the picnic and the barbecue are enjoying one of the least tormented summers in living memory.

The buzzing scourge of the *al fresco* meal had been noticeable because of a cold, damp May which killed many of the queens. Reports of a sudden surge in numbers in parts of southern England over the past few days of hot sunshine suggest that some were simply delayed.

Last August pest controllers were being swamped with requests to destroy wasp nests in attics, garages and out-houses, but this summer business has been slack. Tony Stephens, public relations general manager at Rentokil, said: "This year call-outs have been dramatically down."

George Else, the Natural History Museum's chief hymenopterist — a specialist

in bees and wasps — said: "There have been fewer wasps and wasp nests than anyone can remember. The queens emerged in reasonably good numbers from hibernation but were knocked out by conditions."

Britain is home to nine resident species of social wasp. They play a beneficial role by preying on pest insects and pollinating plants. Wasps will normally attack only to defend their nests or if an individual feels threatened, according to Mr Else, who strongly advises against amateur attempts to destroy an active nest. Queens and their worker daughters can sting repeatedly.

Roger Key, an entomologist with English Nature, said: "It is possible that nest building and other activities were set back a month by the cold May, and that we will now see a sharp rise in the wasp population if more queens survived than we thought."

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Olga, the steppe eagle, is worth about £3,000

## Dog owners warned after eagle escapes

BY PAUL WILKINSON

FARMERS and pet owners have been told to be on their guard after the escape of a large Russian eagle. The handlers of Olga, a steppe eagle with a 6ft wingspan, believe it will be hungry after flying off during a display on Sunday. "When she is hungry small dogs, in particular, could be at risk," said Stuart Pearce, head falconer at the UK Falconry Centre near Thirsk, North Yorkshire, where Olga is kept. He said that Goldie, the golden eagle that escaped from London Zoo in 1965, had attacked a cairn terrier, but that 16-year-old Olga, which is

about the same size as a male golden eagle, was not dangerous to human beings.

It was lifted up to about 2,000ft by a thermal during the show on Sunday. Mr Pearce, 33, said that escaped birds could usually be tempted back by food, but the thermal had carried Olga further than normal and it would be enjoying the cool air of higher altitudes. He thought that prevailing southerlies would carry it north, perhaps as far as Scotland. "It could be confused after spending hours thermal-hopping. We are anxious to receive sightings," Mr Pearce said.

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# Thousands flee Grozny before Russians attack

Although the commander

About a quarter of the estimated 200,000 people left in the capital at the start of the recent fighting have now es-

"Grozny is facing a wholesale slaughter of innocent civilians who are trapped in murderous crossfire between opposing armies," Dr Christo-



pher Besse, the charity's chief executive, said. "Last year's total destruction of Grozny, which cost 40,000 lives, is threatening to repeat itself."

Rendt Gorter, who drove a Merlin medical convoy into Grozny on Sunday, said that it was impossible for the population to leave because roads

man who had suffered a stroke was evacuated at the weekend as his relations wept because they had no means to escape and feared they would never see him again.

"We found Galina Vasino-  
va, a Russian born in Grozny,  
who had been shot in the  
throat while looking for water,"  
the aid worker said. "We  
offered to take her out of the  
city, but she answered in a  
hoarse voice: 'There is no  
need, I have nowhere else to  
go.'"

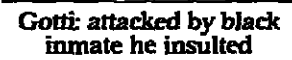
Even the Russian-backed Chechen Government condemned the proposed military siege. Doku Zavgayev, the pro-Moscow Chechen leader, said that civilians had not been given enough time to escape. "It is impossible and unthinkable," he said in Moscow.

**Peking:** China's capital is sinking by up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  in a year because of excessive groundwater use, the Xinhua news agency said. The eastern suburbs have sunk 27.6 in in the past 40 years. (Reuters)

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## English

**Gotti, who once boasted that he liked jail "better than the streets", has spent 22 hours a day alone in his cell since being sentenced to life without parole on murder and racketeering charges in June 1992.**



"I tried to talk her into feeling there was reason to continue," he said. Dr Kevorkian denies any wrongdoing.

Cherry merry is a gift of money, chup is an order to be quiet and a competition-wallah is somebody trying to enter the Indian Civil Service, for which the Indian is stiff. A cousin brother or

liquor is snake-juice, speed money is a bribe to ensure quick service, a talkie-house is a cinema, to tele-tease is to make offensive telephone calls. Something is in the air, and it is a third-class vulgarism.

publishing houses in India, however, still take standard English as their model, "and for this reason many words and usages in Indian English are often regarded as unacceptable."

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## Businessman is fourth to be charged as fears increase of international ring

# Belgian police link child sex victims to trade with East

FROM ROGER BOYES IN CHARLEROI

BELGIAN police are investigating the possibility of a major East-West link in the European child sex business after charging a fourth suspected member of a paedophile ring.

Jean-Michel Nihoul, a Brussels businessman, was hauled into a court yesterday to be charged with criminal association with Marc Dutroux, who has already led police to the bodies of two eight-year-old girls and another suspected accomplice.

Suspects are being moved around various courts in the area to keep them safe from hostile crowds.

The defence team for Nihoul, who denies any connection with a paedophile racket, says he merely lent his car to Dutroux.

Dutroux's second wife, Michelle Martin, has been charged with being an accomplice in the unlawful abduction and illegal imprisonment of children.

Many clues suggest that the Belgian paedophilia scandal is part of an international network. A 59-year-old Dutch businessman living in Belgium has been held for questioning, bolstering press speculation that Dutch paedophile groups have been spilling over the border.

But the most intriguing lead comes from the confession by Dutroux — a convicted child rapist — that he abducted two teenage girls in Ostend last year.

The girls, 19-year-old Eefje Lambrechts and 17-year-old An Marchal, were seen talking to a Czech girl in the port shortly before they were snatched. One theory, partly supported

by Dutroux's confession, is that the girls were sold into a pornography and prostitution ring operating from Prague. Czech police say there is no evidence to support that.

The abduction of Western girls eastwards would run counter to the trend of the past five years, which has seen hundreds of Central and East European girls being sold to Western brothels and nightclubs. But the paedophilia business is more complex than prostitution rackets: adult women, who can work hard as prostitutes, are sometimes traded for abducted children.

Leads are being followed up in Germany, The Netherlands and France. Britain has been asked for technical help, in particular with the search techniques used to detect buried bodies in the murder inquiry involving Fred and Rosemary West, as well as for

advice on the structure of paedophile gangs.

The Belgian police, for the first time, have also pooled their information on 15 children who have disappeared over the past six years. Seven of those are known to have been killed.

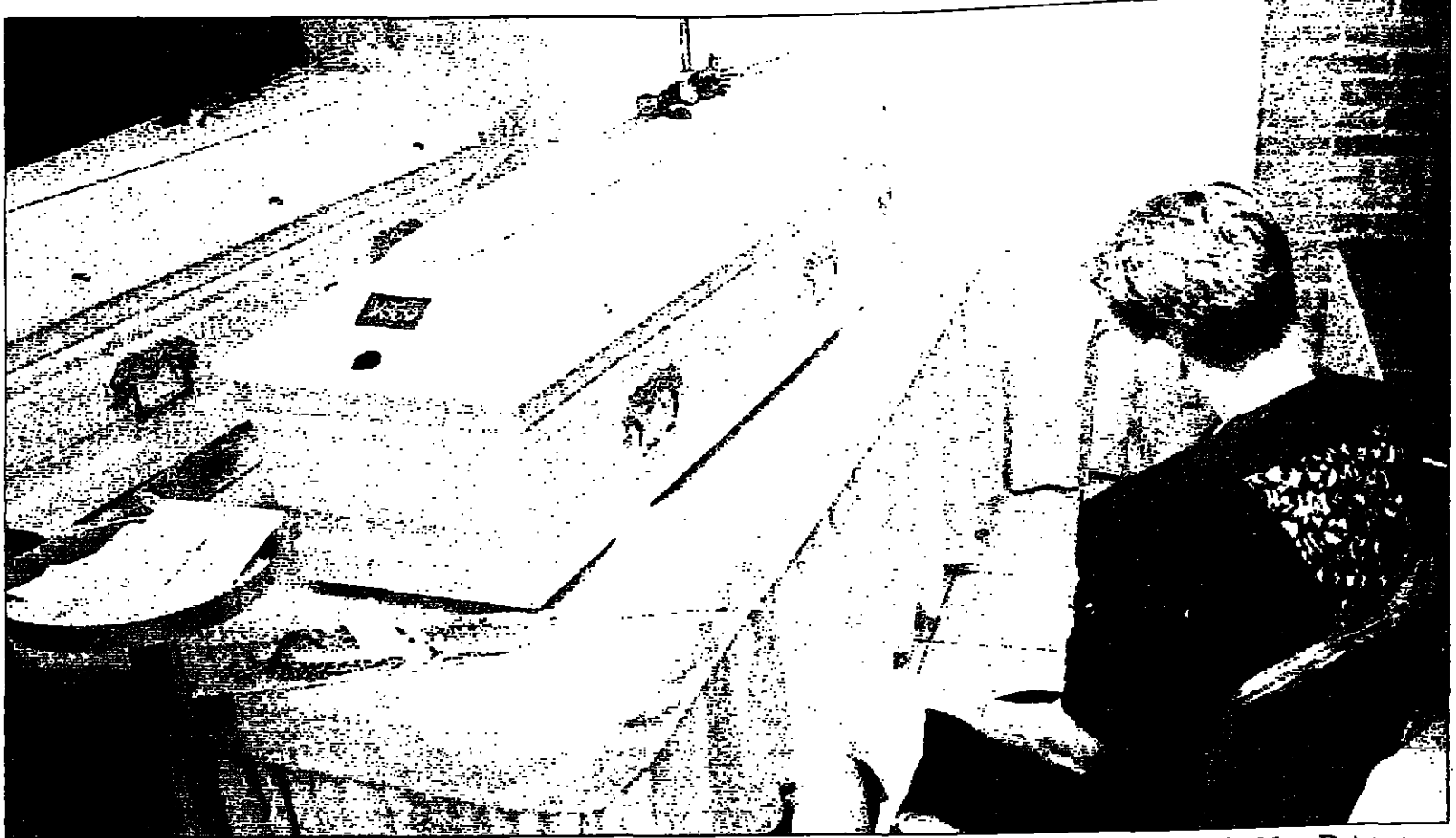
There seems to be no indication that Britain is involved in this apparent paedophilia web, although Belgian police have been alert to a possible British connection since the arrest last year of John Stamford. He was head of the Spartacus International Paedophile Group and died during his trial before a Belgian court last December.

Belgian contacts with the German Bureau of Criminal Investigation confirm the possible involvement of Russian groups.

The search for an international connection partly reflects a Belgian reluctance to accept that such crimes can be committed by Belgians on their own children. But it is also in the nature of organised paedophilia to move across frontiers and exploit differences in the law.

"They are very efficient in the sense that they make the best use of new technical possibilities such as the Internet," Raymond Kendall, Secretary-General of Interpol, said yesterday. "In many cases, national legislation did not foresee the effects of the Internet and lags behind."

Dutroux, who is charged with kidnapping and illegal imprisonment of children, owns 11 houses. Yet he was an unemployed electrician with no legal source of income, apart from the dote.



Corinne Russo prays near the coffin of her daughter, Mélissa, eight, one of two girls found buried at a house owned by Marc Dutroux

## Spotlight on world paedophile network

Revulsion at paedophile gangs will find expression at a world forum in Stockholm next week, writes Eve-Ann Prentice. Queen Silvia of Sweden, the forum's patron, calls child sex 'torture of the worst kind'

THE depraved world of child sex-molesters and the criminals who make vast sums exploiting their perversion is to come under rare public scrutiny next week at an international conference in Stockholm.

Coming amid the revulsion sparked by the hunt for victims of a paedophile gang in Belgium, the World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children will spotlight an evil which has flourished with the collapse of communism, the spread of Aids and access to new technology such as the Internet. The trade in child sex is thought to involve more than 1 million children worldwide.

The conference will be opened next Tuesday by Queen Silvia of Sweden who recently made a rare outburst on television against the laws dealing with sex offences. The Queen, who is patron of next week's gathering, rebuked Swedish politicians for not

taking firm enough action and called for the name and photograph of anyone who sexually abused a child to be published throughout Sweden. She said she had seen some pornographic films involving children and was devastated by the images, saying all politicians should watch these films to make them act. "It is the worst thing I have ever seen," the Queen said. "It is torture of the worst kind."

The forum is likely to call on governments to pass legislation allowing for tourists who commit child sex offences abroad to be tried in their

home countries. Only 12 countries — Britain is not one of them — currently allow this, although Britain is expected to pass such a law in the autumn.

The gathering is the brainchild of the organisation End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism, supported by the Swedish Government and the United Nations Children's Fund.

According to conference organisers, the Internet has played its part in the expansion of the sex trade. "With nearly 30 million users, it makes pornography potentially accessible to anyone with a computer and a

modern," they said. In Britain, the focus on child sex abuse has sharpened in the past few years with a series of reports on youngsters being exploited while in the care of social services. Interpol has also been investigating for some time Europe-wide paedophile networks, especially in France and Switzerland.

The organisers of the Stockholm conference hope that delegates will adopt an action plan which will include asking governments to:

- Make money available to combat the sexual exploitation of children and place a high priority on easing the problem;
- Promote closer co-operation between groups and promote family life to prevent children falling prey to prostitution and other forms of sexual abuse in the first place; and
- Give children immunity from prosecution for prostitution.



Martin: charged with imprisoning children

## Two years in jail for Clinton's ex-partner

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT CLINTON has a sharp reminder of a past that could derail his electoral future yesterday when a former partner in Whitewater was sentenced to two years in prison.

Susan McDougal, one of three former Clinton associates convicted of fraud and conspiracy in May, had been found guilty on four charges relating to a fraudulent \$300,000 (£193,500) business loan she received in 1986.

The prosecution alleged that Mr Clinton put pressure on an Arkansas banker to grant the loan, a claim the President has denied under oath.

The sentence, which included an order to make restitution of the \$300,000, plus interest, to the United States Small Business Administration, sent shockwaves through the White House.

Like McDougal, officials in Washington expected a lenient sentence after the sentencing on Monday of Jim Guy Tucker, Mr Clinton's successor as Arkansas Governor. Mr Tucker was ordered to serve four years' probation after his lawyer argued that the former governor was suffering from a liver complaint.

Yesterday's sentence was seen as a boost for Kenneth Starr, the independent prosecutor investigating events surrounding the Whitewater land development venture.

The prosecution is eager to establish whether the Clintons participated in illegal diversion of funds from the Madison Guaranty bank to Whitewater.

## Powell fuels speculation over cabinet post with surprise campaign trip

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

COLIN POWELL unexpectedly joined Bob Dole on the campaign trail for the first time yesterday amid renewed speculation that he would be Secretary of State in a Dole administration.

General Powell, America's most popular public figure, accompanied Mr Dole on a trip to address military veterans in Kentucky just hours after Newt Gingrich, the House Speaker, told Republican volunteers in his Georgia district that "Colin has already indicated he'd accept" the post.

The Gulf War hero insisted that he had been offered a post but had accepted nothing. He did not, however, rule out the possibility. "Anything's open, but right now the more important thing is to get the [Republican] team elected," he said.

Several Dole advisers are known to be keen to strengthen their candidate's electoral appeal by announcing before November's election that General Powell would be part of a Dole cabinet.

Mr Dole's campaign enjoyed another two boosts yesterday. He was handed a potent new campaign issue by a government report revealing a dramatic rise in teenage drug use since President Clinton took office, and three new polls confirmed a major erosion of Mr Clinton's lead following the meticulously stage-managed Republican convention.

The Health Department's report on drug abuse showed a 78 per cent rise in the use of illegal drugs by 12 to 17-year-olds since 1992. Use of LSD rose 54 per cent, cocaine 166

per cent and marijuana 37 per cent. A second report showed a 58 per cent increase in emergency hospital admissions for heroin use and 19 per cent for cocaine. Levels of adult drug abuse were unchanged.

The report was an obvious embarrassment to Mr Clinton on an issue of great public concern. He has pared federal drug-fighting programmes since taking office. Last month, the White House admitted employing 21 people whose background checks showed recent or extensive drug use.

Addressing last week's convention Mr Dole painted a bleak portrait of an America ravaged by crime, drugs and family breakdown. He blamed the Clintons' permissive baby-boomer generation and offered himself as a "bridge" back to an age of stronger values.

Polls for The New York Times, USA Today and ABC television showed Mr Dole trailing Mr Clinton by 11, seven and four percentage

points respectively. In each case, Mr Dole had at least halved the President's pre-convention lead. Ross Perot, who officially joined the race on Sunday, attracted between 7 per cent and 11 per cent support.

A Dole campaign spokesman claimed the trend was "powerfully in the direction of Bob Dole, Jack Kemp and taxpayers who want a 15 per cent tax cut".

George Stephanopoulos, a top White House adviser, dismissed Mr Dole's advance as "the standard cotton-candy bounce" all candidates enjoy immediately after conventions, and Democrats claimed it would vanish when their convention opens in Chicago on Monday.

The New York Times poll also revealed considerable public scepticism towards the centrepiece of Mr Dole's campaign — his promise to cut taxes by \$548 billion over the next six years while simultaneously balancing the budget.

While 10 per cent favoured tax cuts in principle, only 38 per cent believed Mr Dole would actually deliver them. 53 per cent said balancing the budget while cutting taxes was impossible, and just 22 per cent wanted lower taxes if that meant higher federal deficits.

Mr Dole used yesterday's speech to accuse Mr Clinton of devastating cuts in military spending. Mr Clinton meanwhile signed legislation that would benefit ten million Americans by raising the minimum hourly wage by 90 cents to \$5.15 (£3.30) over the next year.



Murdered TV boss, Richard Diack, with his wife Emelia

## Scot's widow fails to suppress diary

FROM ROGER MAYNARD IN SYDNEY

THE widow of a Scottish television executive murdered in Australia in 1992 failed yesterday to stop publication of a diary which described their deteriorating relationship.

Emelia Bresciani, whose husband Richard Diack was beaten to death in the Blue Mountains near Sydney, had been greatly distressed by the diary's contents. Peter Bodor, her lawyer, told an inquest.

But the coronor, Phil Molan, rejected an application to restrict publication of the diary, found on a computer disc after Diack's death.

The Scot, who was 41 and had family in Edinburgh, moved to Australia in the 1970s. He was human resources manager at SBS, Australia's multicultural TV station, where he met Ms Bresciani. Diack married the Peruvian-born journalist, a presenter for the station, in January 1992. But eight months later he was dead, the

victim of an assault while walking in the Blue Mountains. Robbery did not appear to be the prime motive because a valuable watch was still on his wrist when the body was found the next day.

Detective Sergeant Graeme Merkel, who headed the inquiry, told the inquest: "The only person identified with a possible motive was Ms Bresciani."

But he added: "There is no direct evidence to show any involvement in his death." Sergeant Merkel said Ms Bresciani, 37, was in Sydney on the day of the murder.

The officer said that Diack, who had property in Melbourne and Sydney as well as a £150,000 pension entitlement, had clearly been intending to leave his wife shortly before his death.

The computerised diary was erased by Ms Bresciani after an SBS employee gave it to her, but it was retrieved later by police.

## Reagan's 'Western White House' goes on sale for \$6m

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

PERCHED in the California mountains above Santa Barbara, the Reagan family ranch that served for eight years as a "Western White House" is being offered for sale at a reported asking price of nearly \$6 million (£3.9 million).

Ronald Reagan, the former President who has Alzheimer's disease, no longer visits the rustic 680-acre spread where he once rode in the rain with the Queen and took Mikhail Gorbachev, the former Soviet leader, for a ride in a Jeep. "Sadly... it has not been used since the onset of his illness," the Reagans' spokeswoman confirmed in a statement.

The Reagans lost a valuable source of income when the former President stopped public speaking and they face mounting healthcare bills because of his condition, their son, Michael, said yesterday. Mr Reagan, a radio talk show host, was hinting that a financial squeeze may have been the main reason for his parents' decision to sell the ranch his father once described as "close to heaven".

"They do not have any income except investments made in the blind trust when he was the President," Mr Reagan told the Los Angeles Times. "They have never been as rich as people thought they would be."

Local estate agents said that \$5 million to \$6 million was a steep asking price given California's slack property market and the relatively modest style of the Reagans' retreat. Whether offers of that order came in depended on the power of the Reagan name, they said.

High above the Pacific on a narrow, winding road, the ranch boasts oak groves, a meadow and a pond but otherwise is "a pretty basic property", said one agent with a larger ranch listed for half the price.

The Reagans bought the ranch, known as Rancho del Cielo, in the early 1970s, reportedly for \$527,000. During the eight-year, two-term Reagan presidency it proved an invaluable public relations tool, allowing the septuagenarian President to belie his age with photo-opportunities of him engaged in vigorous outdoor pursuits, including riding horses and chopping wood.

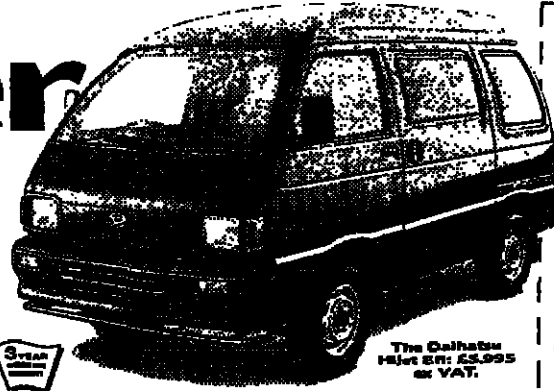
Mr Reagan now lives with his wife, Nancy, in a mansion in Los Angeles. Their ranch is being sold by Sotheby International Realty.



Reagan: used his ranch to display outdoor pursuits

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# Rule Britannia — and the rest of her sisters

Hand by the Houses of Parliament, her arm uplifted against the murky swell of the Thames and the muggy London skies, stands the statue of Boadicea, the warrior queen. Brutal in her rebellion, she hurled herself with maddened courage against the shields of her Roman foes, before she was finally defeated and then proudly died by her own hand.

This avenging queen of the native Britons has been upheld as an icon through two millennia. Yet despite her indomitable example, our traditions have shunted women into a secondary role. Royal succession is governed by laws of male primogeniture. The first-born child of a sovereign or aristocrat should succeed to the throne or the title, regardless of sex.

Pericles, that sober Athenian statesman, was one of the first writers to cast women in a negative role. "The greatest glory of women is to be least talked about by men, in praise or blame,"

Three Queens have proved to be great monarchs — so why should we fear a change in the law of succession?

he wrote. True, the ancient world did not mind women as a symbol of victory or power. Athena sprang fully armed from Zeus's head with a mighty shout. But it was only Zeus, the Father of Heaven, who might wield the thunderbolt, controlling with its fatal flash his quarrelsome Olympian family.

When women acquired political power in the classical world they were seen as threatening creatures. The avenging Clytemnestra beheaded Agamemnon with an axe, the enchantress Medea slaughtered her own offspring.

Myths such as these shore up an atavistic fear of female potentates: a wariness of the savage female spider who devours her paltry mate, or the wily preying mantis who decapitates her diminutive husband while he copulates.

But the examples of our history should dispel such fears. Three of

our queens have proved among the most successful of our monarchs. Gloriana, or Elizabeth I, repulsed not only the Spanish Navy but also all those attempts to press her into a dynastic marriage. Although some now suggest that she won a reputation in advance of her achievements, she maintained relative stability for 45 years. For 64 years Victoria reigned over what was probably the most prosperous and self-confident era of British history. Our own Queen is a calm successor for modern times.

In the 20th century and often, paradoxically, in the nations in which they are most suppressed, women emerge as impressive leaders. From Sirimavo Bandaranaike in Sri Lanka, who in 1960 became the world's first female Prime Minister, through Indira Gandhi in India and Golda Meir in Israel, to Benazir

Bhutto in Pakistan and our own Margaret Thatcher, women have played a powerful part.

The concept of preferential male succession is archaic. Though the backbone of any monarchy is a tradition which should not be cast aside to accord with any passing mood, the issue of equality is unlikely to fade away until it has been fully accommodated.

The monarchies of Sweden and Norway have already abandoned sexist traditions of primogeniture. At the moment in Britain there is no female likely to inherit the throne. The question is not one of immediate controversy, so it is an ideal time to debate reform.

In many ways there is little reason to change an anyway illogical tradition which has served adequately for hundreds of years. But where laws of succession carry an important effect is where they concern hereditary

peerages. Although there is no direct link between the laws governing royal succession and the way in which hereditary peerages are passed on, change in the former inevitably carries implications for the latter. It is unlikely that the aristocracy — the base of the pyramid to which the monarchy forms the apex — would continue to follow a tradition which the monarchy had abandoned.

If we assume that Labour Party proposals to ban hereditary peers from the House of Lords come to nothing, one of the chief benefits of change in the laws of succession would be to see more women taking their places in the Upper House, leading to a better balance



Rachel Campbell-Johnston

of opinion and debate.

There would be fewer cases such as that which occurred on the death of "Chopper", the Duke of Portland, in which title and financial assets were separated. The duke, who died in 1980, had only one surviving daughter, to whom he left his money and estates while the dukedom passed to a distant cousin. A noble title and distinguished part of our culture were emasculated.

The succession of women would not necessarily mean that the surnames of our aristocratic houses would change. As in the case of Baroness Edith Summerskill, the former Labour minister, children may take their mother's

maiden name. Rather, fewer hereditary titles would die out. The long history of some Scottish peerages, such as the earldom of Sutherland, and certain English ones — the Mountbatten earldom, for instance — is owing to the fact that they may be passed down the female line.

And the familial disruptions of Henry VIII should not be forgotten, at a time when matrimony seems already a threatened state. The Tudor King famously rid himself of five wives and one Pope in his desperate quest to sire a sturdy son. Bendor, the 2nd Duke of Westminster, married four times in the same quest. He failed. Under today's laws, if the wife of the current duke had not given birth to a son in 1991, the title would have become extinct. Yet the duke has three daughters, too.

Perhaps Maria, Marchioness of Ailesbury, foretold more than a fortuitous marriage for a girl when she wrote: "My dear, my dear, you never know when any beautiful young lady may not blossom into a duchess!"

## I pray for endurance, not happiness

Mary Riddell meets the author Alice Thomas Ellis, and finds her still an unrepentant rebel

The phone rings constantly in Alice Thomas Ellis's drawing room. This time it is Auberon Waugh on the line, with a snippet of news about the incoming Editor of the *Catholic Herald*.

"Oh my Gaad," cries Thomas Ellis, exhaling a waft of Silk Cut smoke towards her nicotine-tinted ceiling. "She sounds like hell, which is doubtless her destination." A throaty laugh, and she replaces the receiver. "Yep, that was Bron. He's just saying that the new woman on the *Herald* sounds like hell."

The less than rhapsodic reception for the freshly appointed Deborah Jones has nothing to do with her unquestionable competence. Jones, however, is a liberal Catholic. Thomas Ellis, one of Britain's leading novelists, is of the orthodox persuasion. The differences between the two camps have, on occasion, made the relationship between God and Satan look cordial.

Three months have passed since Thomas Ellis, then a star *Herald* columnist, made a

trenchant attack on Derek Worlock, the late, revered (and liberal) Archbishop of Liverpool. The paper promptly sacked her and issued a grovelling front-page apology, but the row smouldered on.

Not that Thomas Ellis fanned the flames. Time, however, has made her less cautious. "Wasn't it ridiculous? I missed all the hooah and the fun because I was in Italy. The old Church was supposed to be autocratic, but this new mob will not have one word of criticism."

The sensitive souls of modern Catholicism include Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, who, she believes, has made her less cautious. "Wasn't it ridiculous? I missed all the hooah and the fun because I was in Italy. The old Church was supposed to be autocratic, but this new mob will not have one word of criticism."

"They were venomous, the liberal forces," Hume also. "Oh, yes. He's hopping mad with me." So does she consider him the wrong man for the

job? Clearly she does. "He's a good monk and a good and prayerful man, but I don't think he's a leader." Indeed, she claims that the only obstacle to his instant removal appears to be the lack of a suitable successor. "The trouble is there aren't very good candidates around at the moment. They're all bogged down in this Protestantised, happy-clappy stuff."

Quite the oddest thing about Thomas Ellis is her blend of orthodoxy and irreverence. She is 63, charming and funny, with sweet doe eyes, milk-rinsed hair and an oblique view of the Establishment. This week's suggestion that heirs to the throne may be able to marry Catholics failed to delight her. "It's more dignified not to be a member of that family."

To the outsider, her life seems a divine affair. By day she parks herself on the sofa in the decayed grandeur of her sitting room, dozing and writing by turn. Her new novel, *Fairy Tale*, betrays none of the indolence and all of the skills of a master storyteller. But she has never been just that.

By night she retires to her boxy bedroom with an iron crucifix above the single bed — the cell-like retreat of a once and future nun. A postulant at 19, she left her convent after a year. Now, she thinks, she may rejoin a contemplative order. "I'm still thinking of it. It would cut out an awful lot of fuss and bother. I've got so many beastly, stupid possessions: only memories for there's nothing of any value."

Sister Anna (Alice is her pen name) would, it must be confessed, make a most peculiar nun. Chain-smoking combined with a passion for wine and Belgian chocolates are not the normal survival kit of the ardent novice.

"Darling, in proper Catholicism you can shake such a loose leg. I was brought up among Liverpool Catholics. Out of Mass, into the pub. Drink isn't a problem at all. It's my favourite thing. Bottle of wine. Packet of fags."

Do not think hers a louche existence, for it is far from that. A prodigious worker, she has fought against many setbacks: depression, agoraphobia and personal tragedy. Of her seven children, her daughter Mary lived for only two days, and her son Joshua died, aged 19, when he fell through a roof.

Still her eyes fill with tears at the mention of his name. "It's like having a wound which has been badly cauterised — a burning sensation. Amputation comes to mind."

Two years ago her publisher husband Colin died suddenly of a stroke, leaving her stricken not only by loss but by grief that his last years had been fraught with business problems. "It was very very hard for a time. Colin left no money and a lot of debt, and that was such a worry. I did have a



Alice Thomas Ellis: a blend of orthodoxy and irreverence who combines her traditional faith with chain-smoking and a passion for wine and chocolates

peculiar sort of collapse at one point. I couldn't get off this sofa without help, and I thought my mind was going."

Remedies were suggested for her misery. "Prozac? That didn't do anything for me. I took thyroxin (a thyroid treatment) too, and I've never felt so bloody miserable in my life."

But, for all the sadness, she is not a gloomy woman. Crowns of thorns are a trial to be born by a staunch Catholic, and she has done so heroically. Her children, several of whom live with her, clearly adore her, though none has adopted her love of Catholicism: a disappointment, but she has never imposed her morality on them. Sarah, her youngest daughter, is about to get married in a register office, and, the wedding over, Thomas Ellis will embark on a long retreat at a monastery in New Mexico — but only if the food and plumbing are up to scratch. After that she expects, sooner or later, to end up in a convent. "I hope I'll be with the nuns in a nice little room somewhere, not sitting and gawping at *Blind Date*."

Until then she will work — at her novels, her journalism, and with her husband's publishing firm, where she is a director. Naturally, she will also carry on fighting what she sees as false ecumenism destroying her Church. "It'll go the way of the Church of England, which is running down. If they loosen all the elastic, there's no point."

On the day before her *Catholic Herald* tirade, she bumped into the elastic-lounging-in-chief. "I said to Cardinal Hume that I knew he was mad with me, and he replied, 'Oh, life's too short.' Then the whole thing broke, and now I'm back in outer darkness."

Sometimes it must occur to Thomas Ellis, as she sits and smokes on her battered old sofa during her days of inner darkness, that life is actually too long.

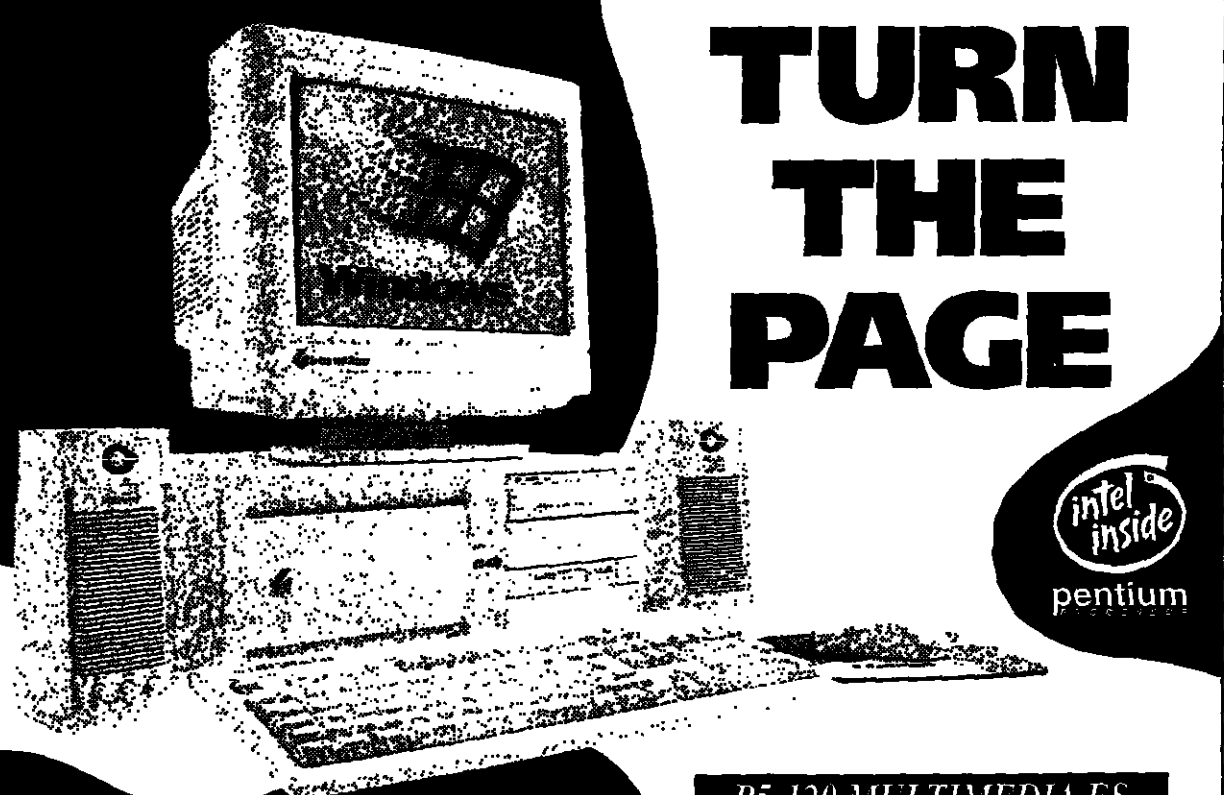
"I do see it as a vale of tears, but you just have to bloody get on with it," she says briskly. "It's pretty pointless to pray for happiness. What you have to pray for is endurance."

A quality which — as the Cardinal will have noted — she possesses in abundance.

● *Fairy Tale* is published on September 5 by Viking, £16

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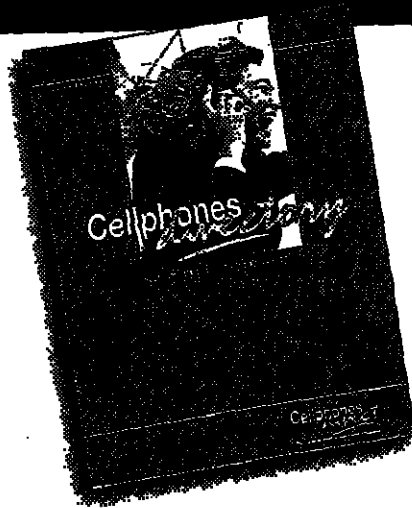
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## Alan Coren



■ Perhaps the motorway driver's last resort should be his first

Come the hour, come the man. It must, of course, be the right man at the right hour: had it been, say, the infant Isaac Newton watching his mother's kettle-tid rattling up and down, there is scant chance that his observation would have led to the 8.14 from Orpington, nor may we be any more confident that had a Virginian potato fallen on Walter Raleigh's head, the world would have ended up with gravity rather than chips. For while serendipity has so often demonstrated itself to be the true mother of invention, she has always required an obstetrician who knew what he was about.

How very fortunate, then, that the man who cometh down the M1 at the hour of 8.40am on Monday not only listens to the Today programme as he cometh, but also, this being the right hour, suddenly findeth himself fancying bacon, eggs, sausages and fried bread, not to say a grilled tomato or three on the side. For convened at the Today programme are two earnest spokespersons, one from the RAC and one from the Council for the Protection of Rural England; and what they have convened for is to argue the freight loss over the RAC's advice to family motorists in this jammed holiday season to avoid taking motorways to their destinations and take rural roads instead. Unsurprisingly, the CPRE lady is deeply agitated by this, and, no less surprisingly, the two factions are still at shrill loggerheads as their listener, ten miles north of London, spots that the sign for Scratchwood Services has a knife and fork on it. So he leaves the motorway, switches off the debate about the preferred course for the inevitable destruction of his heritage, parks in the last of several hundred spaces, and, negotiating the teeming families scuttling to and from all these served vehicles, takes his arteries into the Welcome Break restaurant for a welcome furring.

And he is just mopping up the last of the cholesterol with the last of the stodge when two children sprint in and begin nagging the life out of the couple at the next table: the little boy wants more money for the amusement arcade, and his older sister wants more money for the shop. The father says no, they have to be on their way, at which the little boy — mark these words, history — cries: "Why? We like it here."

And do you know what happens next? An apple falls. A kettle rattles. We like it here. Slowly, as in a dream and why not, for that is what he is suddenly in) the eavesdropper gets up, pays his bill, walks out into that brass August sun which throughout the queenhood is blistering down upon a million cars grinding as many suffering families through the suffering landscape to countless suffering holiday destinations, and thinks: Why? They like it here.

At least, they very soon would, if the dream were realised. For what do the great British majority require for their annual holiday? They do not go to Spain for Spain, nor Greece for Greece, let alone Turkey for Turkey. So, suppose Scratchwood Services offered not a mere hundred cots for conked-out drivers but a thousand well-appointed rooms for fun-seeking holiday-makers, plus a brace of giant swimming pools, a golf course, a casino, a safari park, a boating lake, a go-kart track, six tennis courts, a funfair, bars, ballrooms, shopping malls, and all of this but half an hour from London. What then? And what, the dream continues, of Knutsford Services, as near to Manchester, or Corley Services, as near to Birmingham, or any of umpteen such current blots athwart each British motorway, serving our every conurbation? Suppose all these were gloriously transformed? Not only would no rural blight be involved (the present facilities were, as you know, all built under the caring auspices of the Eyre Trust) it would be reversed: we should see imported forests, artificial ski-slopes, ersatz waterfalls, fresh-populated, what's more, with trekking ponies, ornamental ducks, a walkway here, a peacock there, farmed trout leaping in the floodlight-dappled fishing-pool, IVF grouse hurtling from prefabricated gorse...

While elsewhere, greenly, pleasantly all England would lie protected. I got back in the car, switched on Classic FM, and, would you believe, they were playing William Walton? I tell you, this was a major hour.

Peter Ackroyd finds himself transported into the past, but loses himself in the mysteries of his own mind

## My interpretation of dreams: a time machine

Something odd and perplexing happened to me the other night. I have realised for two or three years that it is possible to direct one's dreams: once one realises that one is in a dreaming state, it is easy enough to create situations or events which then manifest themselves with a reality far beyond the power of what is termed "virtual reality". There is a literature upon this phenomenon. A few weeks ago, for example, quite by chance I was sent an essay entitled "The Dreaming Attention".

Then, very recently, it occurred to me that this faculty (which no doubt all possess) might be tested or widened in interesting ways. And I determined to try an experiment at the earliest possible opportunity. So, a few nights ago, I found myself in a dream which I knew to be a dream. At an appropriate moment in the proceedings I said, "I want to be taken to the 18th century". And there, without the slightest lacuna or hesitation, I was. Or, at least, seemed to be.

I was walking down a street, or a long passage which was opened at one side. Of course there must have been elements of a dream landscape embedded within this scene, but I remarked to myself that the stone exteriors, the windows and the dress of the people seemed absolutely authentic. It was, to be specific, the early 18th century. At one point I remembered being informed that I was in Hendon. I asked to be taken to the pethouse or hospital — at which

point someone laughed, and said that they were the same thing. There the pethouse was before me. I entered it, but the stench was so strong that I retched and rushed outside. There the dream ended.

Yet it had only seemed to end, and I realised soon enough that I had returned to a simpler dream state. So I decided to try again and, this time, to make a more precise request. I was walking up a staircase, and said: "I wish to be taken to 1858." A door appeared before me. I opened it and I was within a mid-Victorian interior where the carpeting and furnishings were, to my eye, quite genuine. I walked into another room, and found it to be a study. The items upon the desk, and the furniture, were again right in detail and general effect. A woman came into the room, who seemed to know me very well.

"Whatever are you doing back so early?" she asked me. I replied that I needed some air, and wished to be taken outside — for the simple reason that I wanted to see where this Victorian dwelling was situated. As we went

down a staircase I asked her, "If you were to write an essay for a periodical, how would you describe the area where you live?"

"West London, of course."

"But if you had to be more precise?"

"Kensington."

I left the house and there, to my astonishment (and, I must say, slight uneasiness) was a street of the mid 19th century, with the doors, facades and areas exactly as they once had been. My dream ended rather abruptly when a late-20th-century London taxi pulled up.

These were the two dream sequences which have puzzled me. I do not for one moment believe in "reincarnation" or "regression", and the origins of these dreams may be more interesting. What is this faculty or aptitude of the brain — the dreaming mind — which is capable of creating what seems to be an authentic past? It seemed so real that in the pethouse I retched. The furnishings of the Victorian house were detailed and complete. How was it achieved?

There is of course a wealth of dream

literature in the English language, from Langland's *Piers Plowman* to Chaucer's *Parlement of Fowls*, through Bunyan's dreams of the pilgrim's progress and Alice's dreams of wonderland, to Coleridge's *Kubla Khan* and De Quincey's fervid dreamscapes. Yet these tend to be contrived and highly controlled exercises in creating a plausible structure for the material of dreams.

What was so odd, and tantalising, about my own experience was that I was suddenly brought into the presence of a palpable reality which could have been created only out of the perusal of old books and pictures, letters and diaries. It is a fearful experience in the sense that I had entered a past so detailed and real that, for an instant, it was as if I might never be able to leave it.

The direction of a dream, then, is in no way similar to the novelist's control of a fictional narrative, simply because the reality of the people and the buildings viewed in sleep is so intense and immediate: they seem to dwell in their own extrinsic space and are utterly imaginable in advance of the experience of actually being among them.

So we must return to the power of the human brain, itself the product of thousands of long and almost dream-like developments. One other sleep experience may be useful here. Between dreams, I sometimes find myself in the presence of the mind itself, displaying its capacities in an endless display of spectra, signs, patterns, geometrical symbols and rapidly changing images. These are not the whorls and colours of hypnagogic imagery which generally occur just before sleep, but a vast and apparently endless continuum of intricate activity which seems almost to be playing with its own variety. Mystics and philosophers have been suggesting for many hundreds of years that the mind is an image of the universe — that indeed it is the universe. Is it too foolish to suggest that it harbours images of the past which are accessible to those who request them?

It has remained, and no doubt will remain, a mystery. One conclusion, at least, can be reached. The Freudian theory of the dreamer as the passive recipient of unconscious dramas or desires is mistaken. If it is possible to direct or control dreams, then they cannot be the product of overwhelming interior impulses. The true explanation escapes me; but these journeys to the past remain a curiosity. I intend to ask to be returned to the early 16th century, to the lifetime of the subject of my latest biography, Thomas More. And what, then, if one asked to be shown the future?

## Crushed by a landslide

John Grigg compares the Conservatives' prospects for the next general election with their worst ever defeat, in 1906



### THE TORIES IN OPPOSITION

regard it as indispensable to the country's way of life. In particular, it was seen as necessary to keep the price of food down. Chamberlain's policy could easily be denounced as a policy for taking food.

Balfour did his best to unite the party on a compromise programme, but could not avoid an appearance of confusion and disarray. The Liberals, on the other hand, were able to go to the country as defenders of the economic status quo. Free trade provided them with a good conservative cause, and it was this more than anything else that turned opinion decisively in their favour.

So why is the 1906 election generally regarded as a radical watershed? Its consequences were, indeed, more radi-

cal than many voters can have expected or intended. The electorate was still far from democratic. No women and only about 60 per cent of men had the vote. Liberal politicians tended to be considerably more advanced than liberal voters.

What was called the "new Liberalism" was gaining ground among party activists. This was a Liberalism that believed in using the power of the State to combat poverty and improve "the condition of the people". Nearly two out of three Liberal candidates in the election mentioned old age pensions — which were introduced in 1908 as the first stage in a programme of social reform associated, above all, with the name of Lloyd George — the basis of the modern welfare state.

How does the political scene today compare with 1906? Now as then, a Conservative Government, after a long period in office, is faced with the likelihood of overwhelming defeat. Now as then, the Tories seem divided and unable to control events, while the main opposition party appears to have regained its confidence and solidarity. Another point of resemblance is the

Lib-Lab factor. At the beginning of the century there was a secret understanding between the Liberals and the infant Labour Party, which had the effect of maximising the anti-Tory vote and preventing the election of Tories where that vote might have been split. One consequence was the election of 30 Labour MPs in 1906, a phenomenon viewed by Balfour with special foreboding. Today there is no pact, overt or covert, but there is a convergence of policy and an apparently increased tendency of Liberal and Labour supporters to vote tactically, to the Tories' disadvantage. The effect, therefore, may be similar.

Just as there was new Liberalism in 1906, so there is "new Labour" today. But the two are very different. New Liberalism was concerned with helping the poor, who then formed a majority of the population but still a minority of the electorate. New Labour is concerned with reassuring the relatively well-off, who comprise a majority of both the population and the electorate.

The European Union today divides the Tories, just as tariff reform divided them in 1906. But the European issue divides Labour no less profoundly, despite a superficial show of unity, whereas the Liberals in 1906 were genuinely united in defence of free trade. What of the leaders? Again there is a great contrast. Balfour was one of the most intellectual of British Prime Ministers (author of *A Defence of Philosophic Doubt* among other works) and also one of the most privileged, succeeding his uncle, Lord Salisbury, in the office. John Major is neither intellectual nor privileged: no Labour leader has come from a harder background.

Tony Blair is a strong and charismatic opposition leader, differing in this from Campbell-Bannerman, whose fitness for the premiership was doubted even by many on his own side until he proved himself in the job, though he died in office only two years later, to be succeeded by Herbert Asquith. Despite Campbell-Bannerman's lack of charisma, he was tougher than he seemed, and he had Cabinet experience. If Blair, who entered Parliament only in 1983, becomes Prime Minister next year, he will match the first Labour Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald's feat of reaching the top at

one bound. In 1906, the Liberals gained 1.2 million votes over the previous election. In 1900 (there were still seven-year Parliaments). But the Tory vote also rose substantially, since the turnout increased from 75 per cent to 83 per cent. The popular margin between the two main parties was only 300,000, out of 5.6 million votes cast. Then as now, the "first-past-the-post" electoral system flattered the victors.

Tomorrow: John Charmley.

## Sitting comfy

DOWN in the cheap seats, the Duchess of York is preparing to bare her soul to America's softest television interviewer. Diane Sawyer, who presents ABC Television's *Prime Time Live*, has been courting Sarah Ferguson for several years. Now the wooing has paid off, with the Duchess agreeing to a chat in November, to coincide with the release of her autobiography, for which she received an estimated £1.3 million.

Sawyer rose from being a weather girl to be a mouthpiece for President Nixon and then a big-name journalist. But do not expect the

sort of fireworks contained in the notorious interviews given by the Prince and Princess of Wales.

Not only is there nothing about the Duchess which could shock anyone any longer, but as part of her divorce settlement she was instructed not to blab about her marriage and the Royal Family. What is more, Sawyer is less Jeremy Paxman than Richard and Judy.

More likely, the Duchess will froth about her two new children's books, which will be upon us this autumn. They describe the adventures of an 11-year-old princess

named Amanda and her American friend Emily. As they say out West, rocker science, it ain't.

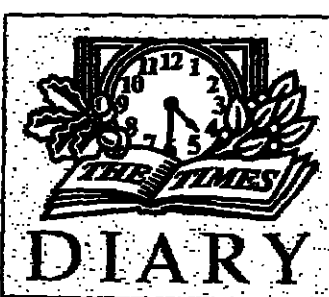
● Nepotism naturally has no place in Pakistan's cricket establishment, although its Under-15 side snacks of great Pakistani players of the past. The team sent over to compete in the Under-15 World Cup at Lord's yesterday was captained by Faisal Iqbal, the nephew of Test batsman Javed Miandad. Also in the side were the sons of leg-spinner Abdul Qadir and of Majid Khan, now chief executive of Pakistani cricket and cousin of Imran Khan.

### Ad fab

THE GOVERNMENT'S shameless decision to reward the advertising honcho Maurice Saatchi with a peerage leaves the new lord with two problems: first what to call himself, and then what to do about his dress code.

Lord Saatchi of Baghdad, his birthplace, is impossible. Lord Saatchi of Charlotte Street home to the Saatchi & Saatchi HQ in the 1980s, might smack too much of heady, over-expansionist flash. Lord Saatchi of Stapleford, after the Sussex village where he lives, is most likely.

As to his clothes, Saatchi is fam-



ous for only ever wearing black and white, down to his black suede shoes. When he is introduced to the House of Lords, however, he will, horrors, have to wear the deep red robes.

Those who murmur that Saatchi may feel awkward about the honours are contradicted by Stefano Hatfield, editor of the advertising trade rag *Campaign*: "There were years when the accounts were never fully paid by the Tories. The Saatchis were very accommodating." In short, Saatchi felt the honours was more than his due.

● John Major has commissioned a photographer to assemble a portfolio of casual family snaps. Sarah King, a jumpy little woman who insists she takes pictures rather than snaps, talks confusingly of her latest commission: "I cannot confirm or deny that I am doing it, but I

should have finished the work by the end of September." The picture which inspired the Prime Minister to hire King, however, gives an interesting clue as to his tastes. It features a rider on a rearing grey horse set against a background of scudding clouds and sky. Very Napoleonic.

### Saddled up

WITH pollution prominent in the news and the Government doing its utmost to encourage the use of bicycles, spin-doctors at the Department of Transport are faced



Bowis: spokes man?

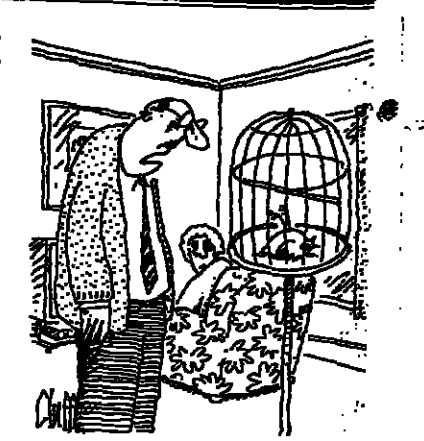
with a problem in John Bowis, the junior Transport Minister. Will he be able to step into the cycling shoes of his predecessor Steven Norris and pose for photographs on behalf of environmentally friendly travel?

Although no oil painting, Norris gamely used to pose for the cameras in tight-fitting cycling gear. Bowis, a larger man, is not exactly Lycra-friendly, and admits that until a strict dietary regime is implemented he is unlikely to be making any bicycle photo-calls.

● Tim Allen, the boyish press officer in Tony Blair's office, has taken offence at my suggestion that he is simply clinging onto the shirt tails of new Labour by buying a house in Tuscany. "I haven't been buying anything out there because I already have one," he says. "I was born there — long before new Labour came into existence."

### Inside view

THESE hot August days are unsettling for staff at BBC Wales. When John Birt, the Armani-clad Director-General of the Corporation, isn't pacing the corridors of its headquarters in London's White City, he heads for a little relaxation to his house in the Brecon Beacons. There, he walks the hills and set-



"I see the pollution levels are up again"

ties down afterwards to a tumbler of sparkling Brecon water or even an iced glass of Chablis in front of the television. And he lets the local staff know what he thinks. "It's very unnerving for them," says a BBC insider. "Someone from BBC Wales was complaining about it only yesterday. They dread his walking breaks." To settle their nerves, staff have adopted the mantra from London concerning the new BBC Chairman Sir Christopher Bland: "Bland is grand."

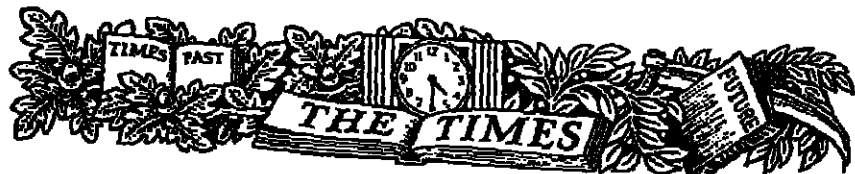
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The Duchess and the interviewer: playing softball







## DIESEL EXHAUSTION

Gummer's best-laid plans face dirty future

When the apparently limitless desire for personal mobility comes up against the all-too-limited ability of the environment to shrug off more insults, the Government has some awkward decisions to make.

Today John Gummer, the Environment Secretary, will admit that traffic pollution is a serious health hazard which may be hastening the death of thousands of people every year. He will set new limits on exposure to a range of pollutants, and then tell harassed local authorities that it is now their responsibility to enforce them. The police will lend a hand, if only the Home Office can be persuaded that this is an appropriate use of police time. A hollow laugh before a croak would seem the only appropriate response.

Governments do not have a distinguished record in dealing with vehicle pollution. When the Clean Air Act of 1956 liberated the cities from the smoke and sulphur dioxide of coal-burning, governments of every colour preened themselves at their success for a generation. Meanwhile a new threat was creeping up on them unawares. Anyone watching the experience of American cities, especially Los Angeles, might have suspected that traffic pollution would become a threat here too. But officialdom was slow to acknowledge it. Monitoring was unwisely neglected and research left undone. Motorists were advised that if there was a problem, it came from petrol-powered rather than diesel vehicles; the dirty exhausts of buses and trucks had no implications for human health.

New evidence suggests this was very far from the truth. The particles in diesel exhausts are now seen as the worst villains of all, able to penetrate deep into the lung, provoking a defensive response which can hasten the death of vulnerable people, especially those with heart or lung con-

ditions. Nor is it possible to point the finger only at obviously dirty exhausts. Small particles do not appear as black as larger ones: it is possible that even apparently clean diesels may be doing a disproportionate share of the damage. The motorists who turned to diesel because of its green credentials have been cruelly mocked by this change of opinion.

It is true that the new evidence is largely inferential. It does not, for example, appear to be true that vehicle pollution is responsible for the rapid growth of asthma, since that is manifest both in cities and in rural areas. It is more plausible, on present evidence, to argue that pollution provokes asthma attacks in people who have already developed the disease. Likewise, the evidence that particulates are associated with an increased risk of death from heart disease is based on the crude instrument of epidemiology, measuring the deaths in cities during pollution alerts and comparing them with rates when the air is cleaner. Such evidence, however, is as good as we are likely to get.

The new plans to be unveiled today will set limits for eight different pollutants, including particulates and ozone. The limits will be part of a ten-year plan aimed at keeping British cities within the limits, for instance by restricting access to pedestrians and rerouting traffic. Mr Gummer deserves credit for putting forward these plans, the first of their kind in Europe. There must be doubt about, however, how effectively they can be implemented. Britain has one of the highest densities of cars in Europe; persuading people away from cars will be very unpopular. The Government may hope that new technology, including particulate traps, can make diesel vehicles safer. But the evidence of the past is that every new technology is in vain chase after the effects of traffic growth.

## GERMANY'S BLIND EYE

Trade with terrorist regimes needs strict rules and a long spoon

The arrest of two German businessmen on suspicion of helping Libya to build a poison gas factory underlines again the ruthless nature of Colonel Gaddafi's regime. More embarrassingly, it also highlights Germany's failure to take proper steps to control the sale of machinery and deadly equipment to rogue regimes intent on mass destruction.

This is not the first time that German businessmen have been arrested for involvement in Libya's chemical weapons programme. No wonder the Americans are contemptuous of European promises to crack down on international terrorism: no wonder they insist that only sanctions on companies doing business with such regimes will curb the trade in terror.

The scale of German involvement, the failure — despite Bonn's repeated assurances — to block loopholes in existing export bans and the impunity with which the men adapted and shipped out the equipment point to serious lapses in German counter-intelligence. The record of German industry in profiting from dictators is extensive; but the involvement in plans to manufacture sarin, a poison gas invented by the Nazis, should send a chill throughout the country.

Politicians in some of Germany's neighbours, and especially in Israel, will point to the numerous cases of German, or former East German, involvement in weapons programmes that could threaten Israel. From the rocket scientists employed by Nasser to the engineers who helped Iraq to extend its missiles' range and the businessmen who built Libya's Rabta poison gas plant German involvement in Middle East weapons programmes has been controversial.

Of course, not only Germans have sold arms to dubious regimes: Britain, too, has

profited from such a trade, as the arms-for-Iraq scandal revealed. The difference is that Germany continues to give rogue regimes the benefit of the doubt. Bonn's insistence on maintaining a dialogue with Tehran and others, a legacy of the feeble policies of Hans-Dietrich Genscher, has led to such absurdities as the formal reception of Iran's intelligence chief by Bernd Schmidbauer, Chancellor Kohl's powerful intelligence supremo. There does not seem to be sufficient determination in Bonn or in the boardrooms of leading German companies to confront governments known to support terrorism — especially if there are profitable export contracts in the offing.

Herr Kohl has committed himself to helping end international atrocities as firmly as any Western leader. The minimum that he needs to do now is to improve German counter-intelligence. Germany has a number of laws defining what may or may not be exported. Libya remains firmly on the embargo list despite a recent weakening of some of the restrictions. Responsibility for policing export embargoes, however, appears to fall too often between the federal and state governments.

If, as now appears from recent reports, the BND, Germany's foreign intelligence service, was fully aware of the delivery of equipment to Libya, then many questions in Germany should follow. Did exports go ahead knowingly? Was part of the Government secretly encouraging contacts with Libya? Has Bonn now got a potential Matrix Churchill scandal on its hands? The Americans, and other allies, will be watching the fallout closely. No chances should be taken with a regime as unstable and malign as that of Colonel Gaddafi.

## INSIDE THE TOMB

Welcome to the most Victorian mausoleum of them all

This Bank Holiday weekend the public has an opportunity to see inside the most private and peculiar British royal monument. In order to give wider access to the Royal Collection, the Queen has directed that the mausoleum at Frogmore be open from Saturday to Monday. Previously Victoria and Albert's private tomb has been open for only one inconvenient day a year, the Wednesday nearest to Victoria's birthday, May 24. Accordingly it has been little noticed. The interior of the mausoleum is rarely photographed because of the long shadows cast by the Victorian taboo and extravagance about death.

Thomas Browne, the old prose poet of mortality, observed that man is a noble animal, splendid in ashes, and pompous in the grave. Like any mausoleum worthy of the name, Victoria and Albert's at Frogmore offers both splendour and pomposity. The Queen summoned her Uncle Leopold, architect and the spirit of a thirteenth century Italian church. Albert's influence can be seen in the homages to Raphael, the greatest artist, in his view, who had ever lived. Those who look up — attempting to see the view intended for the occupants — see clouds and gold stars on high.

But the Victoria and Albert Mausoleum is modest, it must be said, in comparison with the great edifice that gave it its name. When the great edifice of Caria died in 353 BC, his King Mausolus of Caria died in 353 BC, his widow Artemisia built him a memorial at Halicarnassus (the modern Bodrum) that became one of the Seven Wonders of the

ancient World. It included 36 Ionic columns and a pyramid that was more than 130 feet high. His statue and sculptures from the mausoleum, following an immortality-beating earthquake of the fifteenth century, came to rest in the British Museum in 1859, appropriately enough just two years before Albert's death.

Subsequent builders and occupants of mausoleums have carried on his tradition. The Taj Mahal and the mausoleum called Hadrian's Tomb, now the Castel Sant' Angelo in Rome, are not inconspicuous buildings. In their mausoleums, Frederick William at Charlottenburg and Napoleon III at Farnborough were also defying death by saying, "Look on my tombs, ye mighty, and remember."

Victoria and Albert's grand mausoleum at Windsor has marbles of many colours and Anglicised pastiche of Italian masterpieces. But it also sends a thoroughly Victorian message of domestic order, privacy and self-confidence. Victoria's effigy was carved at the same time as Albert's, and then waited 40 years to be back with him again. The observant tourist can spot the join.

The Queen and her Prince Consort are well remembered in the great national institutions they encouraged, the literature they inspired (some of it Victoria's own letters), and the stable tradition they handed on. Even a mausoleum is a poor substitute for life. But Victoria and Albert's mausoleum is a unique symbol of the higher Victorian values, well worth the visit.

## Poor support for British invention

From Sir Christopher Cockerell, FRS

Sir, The story of Sir Frank Whittle and the jet engine (obituary, August 10; letters, August 15) is sad reading. He was treated shockingly both by the Establishment and by industry, a story that has happened so often before.

Lord Kelvin in 1896 stated: "I have not the smallest molecule of faith in air navigation other than ballooning." A few years later along came the Wright brothers. Parsons went broke twice in attempting to launch his steam turbine, which now generates most of the world's electricity. Marconi very nearly went broke in trying to launch wireless.

Baird invented and demonstrated a mechanical system of television, and having alerted the world to it, died in a garret after a lifetime of work. We were the first to produce a really workable computer with a useful memory; and the Americans came over, saw it, went back, and created the world's leading computer industry. An Englishman invented a successful mechanically-controlled hydrofoil boat and spent his life furthering it, but the big battalions came in and he suffered like Baird.

Whittle had his ideas for jet engines in 1928. In 1934 the British Under-Secretary of State for Air said that "scientific investigation into the possibilities of jet propulsion" has given no indication that the method could be a serious competitor to the airscrew-engine combination.

Why is the above such a dismal reading? Why have we let Germany and Japan and the countries on the Pacific seaboard overtake us and outsell us? We had a large machine-tool industry. Now we buy our computerised machine tools from the Far East, along with our cameras and watches and shoes and motorbikes and many other things. The reasons for our decline in the export league lie so deep that the Chancellor of the Exchequer can do nothing to reverse this downward trend.

In this century cheap fuel and technological advances, which most people accept without a thought of how they came about, enabled the Western world to shoot ahead. Now these advances are increasingly coming from the Far East.

I was born and bred in Cambridge, and its university is supposed to be one piece, but it isn't. The arts and classics, and the humanities are one piece, the other and newer second piece is engineering and the sciences, and neither half can talk to the other.

So I blame the educational system for early specialisation and, in the new technological age, turning out a mass of half-educated people. This is all right for cops, but is hopeless for the future leaders of our society. Our future leaders must have a framework of the humanities and arts, and a framework of engineering and the sciences, so they are capable of understanding and assessing future trends. Another and important factor in our decline is that engineers and innovators are the lowest paid of all the professions, with the results that engineering does not attract and cannot hold its fair share of bright young people. If our designs were good enough our balance of payments would be in the black.

I think I'd better emigrate.  
Yours faithfully,  
CHRISTOPHER COCKERELL,  
16 Prospect Place, Hythe, Kent,  
August 16.

## BSE cattle cull

From Mrs Judith Piers

Sir, I sympathise with the feelings of Doreen Forsyth (letter, August 17) who was extremely distressed as her ten-day-old calves were being herded into a wagon to be taken away for slaughter.

I have felt similarly distressed at seeing the "confused faces" of baby calves gazing out of crowded trucks in lay-bys on the way to the port of Brightlingsea for export. They, presumably, left their farm gates with their farmer's consent.

There has to be a better, and more humane, way to manage the lives and deaths of living animals destined for the table.

Yours faithfully,  
JUDITH PIERIS,  
54 Brooklane Field, Harlow, Essex,  
August 17.

From Mr Barry Hyman

Sir, Put aside Doreen Forsyth's anthropomorphic concerns about "the confused faces" of the calves leaving their farm for premature slaughter.

Why, as a person who breeds animals to be killed for us to eat, should she be so concerned about their death at ten days, or at a later time of her choosing? Presumably she does not shed tears for those she sends to the abattoir and which provide her livelihood. Perhaps her real concerns, not unreasonably, are exposed in her later paragraphs about "wrecking the agricultural economy" and "cheapest food in Europe".

That farming families are the victims of government muddle and complacency is regrettable, but crocodile tears about the early disappearance of a meal-ticket do not persuade.

Yours faithfully,  
BARRY HYMAN,  
4 Priory View,  
Bushey Heath, Hertfordshire,  
August 17.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

### A-level results: lower standards or brighter students?

From the Headmaster of  
Bishopshalt School

Sir, The alleged decline in the value of A-level grades by about 25 per cent during the past seven years (letters, August 17) has not as yet brought about a reduction in the proportion of undergraduates getting good degrees at the longer-established universities, quite the contrary in fact.

How can we explain this? Has there been, during the same period, a remarkable improvement in the quality and quantity of teaching at those universities?

Perhaps the students are 25 per cent more intelligent than their predecessors and are thus more than able to overcome the handicap of having been prepared only for easy A levels.

Another possible explanation is that our most highly respected universities have seriously devalued the quality of their degrees.

Or could it be that the decline in A-level standards, if real, has been greatly exaggerated? My own observation of the high quality of work produced by many of today's A-level students in-

dines me to consider this to be the more likely explanation.

Yours faithfully,  
LESLIE BATHER, Headmaster,  
Bishopshalt School,  
Hillingdon, Uxbridge, Middlesex,  
August 17.

From Mr Clive R. Hart

Sir, As the officer of the School Examinations and Assessment Council (Seac) who drew up the ground rules for modular A levels in 1993, it seems to me that the key issue is whether A levels, modular or otherwise, are intended primarily to testify to subject-based learning and scholarship, or to the ability to cope with a large amount of last-minute learning and assessment all at one go.

Modular A levels are intended to support the former; their critics attach more weight to the latter, believing, in effect, that the ability to cope with multiple examinations is a better indicator of intellectual ability than the quality of the learning itself. Unfortunately, there is no evidence to support or refute this view.

The appearance, perhaps in great numbers, of would-be students (many accompanied by parents) is not merely unhelpful, and indeed inequitable, but pointless. All cases at this time are determined on academic criteria, and the quasi-blackmail of a personal approach, with all the costs in travel that that may entail, is not to be recommended.

Once again, it seems necessary to remind Ucas that its responsibilities cannot usurp those of the universities themselves.

Yours faithfully,  
R. B. BEHENNA  
(Academic Secretary),  
University of Exeter,  
Northcote House,  
The Queen's Drive, Exeter, Devon,  
August 19.

### University places

From Mr Barrie Behenna

Sir, I see from your report, "Desperate students on college doorsteps" (August 17), that the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (Ucas) has advised students so far without places that they should visit universities personally to advance their case with admissions tutors.

May I offer other advice? Please do not do that. At this time universities are totally engaged in the difficult operation of balancing acceptable admissions standards against the financial pitfalls of unfilled (or overfilled) places. Offers must therefore be subject to some kind of overall monitoring, and departmental freedom is reduced at this stage.

### Foundation of European democracy

From Mr Michael Shrimpton

Sir, The Danish Supreme Court has decided that a case filed by 11 EU opponents questioning the constitutionality of the Maastricht treaty ratification may be considered by a lower court (report, August 14). This is a landmark decision and is to be welcomed.

The Treaty of European Union requires that ratification be in accordance with the "respective constitutional requirements" of each high contracting party; if the Danish ratification is now struck down by the courts, the treaty itself will be at risk.

As I understand it, the substantive issue will now proceed to the Eastern High Court in Copenhagen, subject to a further right of appeal to the Supreme Court, and there is no right of appeal to the Luxembourg Court. The interpretation of the Danish Constitution lies within the exclusive competence of the Danish courts.

The Danish courts have a reputation for integrity, independence and freedom from political interference unmatched by the courts of any European country. To those qualities we must now add fearlessness.

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL SHRIMPTON,  
Francis Taylor Building,  
Temple, EC4,  
August 14.

From the Head of the UK Office of the European Parliament

Sir, William Rees-Mogg ("No EMU without a superstate", August 15) asserts that "such democracy as exists in

Europe is derived from the election of the 15 national governments, not from the European Parliament, which does not effectively control the Commission, let alone the Council of Ministers".

That is an over-simplification. Such parliamentary democracy as exists in Europe rests on several foundations, among them the election of 15 national parliaments (not governments) and on the direct election of the European Parliament. Many other factors contribute to democracy as we understand it, chief among them the rule of law, respect for human rights and a free press.

As for control of the Commission (the executive) by the European Parliament (the legislature), doubtless the current negotiations in the inter-governmental conference will result in a strengthening of Parliament's powers in that respect.

But to criticise the European Parliament for not controlling the Council of Ministers is a paradoxical argument, since the Council is also an arm of the legislature. It is for Council and Parliament to control the Commission, which — in their different ways — they both do.

Serious discussion about the future of Europe's institutions should rest on as clear an understanding of their present roles as possible.

Yours faithfully,  
MARTYN BOND,  
Head, UK Office of the European Parliament,  
2 Queen Anne's Gate, SW1,  
August 15.

### Northern stars

From Mr Alan Sykes

Sir, Libby Purves writes of the distressing quantity of light pollution in the British Isles ("Under our starless skies", August 13) and fears that National Lottery money will go to projects that exacerbate this problem.

Heckling in the North of England we are taking steps that will, I am sure, meet with her approval. As part of the celebrations co-ordinated by Northern Lights for the Year of the Visual Arts, the charity that plans and develops cycle routes, Sustrans, has commissioned the Arizona-based artist James Turrell to create a "Pennine Skyspace".

This will be sited close to the coast-to-coast cycle route on the Cumbria/Northumberland border at the highest point of the North Pennines.

### Devil politics

From Mr Kit Constable Maxwell

Sir, To electioneer by making a devil of Tony Blair (letters, August 17) challenges the foundations of our system. To boast the strength of one political party against the weakness of another is a shabby enough way to attempt to appeal to intelligent voters; but to portray opponents as evil is deplorable.

If the new generation sees such defamation and ridicule what sort of a forum for social, religious or political freedom can we expect in the future?

Yours sincerely,  
KIT CONSTABLE MAXWELL,  
Garden Cottage, Ichen Stoke,  
Alresford, Hampshire,  
August 17.

The skyspace will be a circular stone structure with an open roof, forcing visitors to look up at the sky where there is less light pollution than anywhere else in England.

I am pleased to add that the Arts Council recently allocated this project £80,000 from its section of lottery proceeds. Subject to planning consent from Eden District Council, the skyspace could be up by next summer.

Last night I went up to the site and watched some shooting stars seemingly coming from Cassiopeia. Next year perhaps Libby Purves will join me in watching the Perseid meteor shower from the skyspace.

Yours faithfully,  
ALAN SYKES,  
Northern Lights,  
Portland House, New Bridge Street,  
Newcastle upon Tyne,  
August 14.

### Beach politics

From Mr Andrew Cunningham-Hughes

Sir, Are holidays no longer safe from electioneering (report and leading article, August 16)? Now I am loath to book a trip to the Mongolian wilderness for fear of meeting Clare Short.

I remain, Sir, in the garden,  
ANDREW CUNNINGHAM-HUGHES,  
Plantation Cottage,  
Cook's Pond Lane,  
Milland, West Sussex,  
August 16.

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.

Rather than spend time on trying to decide whether modular A levels are easier or more demanding than their traditional counterparts, the resources of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority and others would surely be put to more effective use in trying to establish which approach results in the better retention of learning and its subsequent application. At least we would then have some idea on how well, or not, A levels are serving the country.

Yours sincerely,  
CLIVE R. HART  
(Assistant Chief Executive,  
Seac, 1988-93),  
3 Cherry Tree Close,  
Hugghenden Valley,  
High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire,  
August 19.

From Mr Paul Shephard

Sir, Examinations do not test the quality of students — they test how well they have prepared for the exams. It is not surprising that exam grades are forever rising when the schools, which might otherwise devote themselves to educating their pupils, are instead concentrating on cramming them with curricula. Perhaps pushy parents are to blame.

Yours sincerely,  
PAUL SHEPHERD,  
22 York Rise, NW5,  
August 15.

From Mrs Fletcher Hunt

Sir, John Humphrys ridiculed the notion on the *Today* programme this morning that A-level students are becoming brighter.

Surely if athletics are running faster and children are growing taller there is every reason to believe that children are becoming brighter too. Let us congratulate them on their good results.

Yours sincerely,  
PADDY HUNT,  
35 Ponsonby Place, SW1,  
August 14.

### Bratby's portraits

From Mr Michael Moynihan

Sir, Alan Franks's reference to the "more than 1,000 of the great, good, rich and royal" painted by John Bratby (Magazine, August 10) reminded me of an interview I had with the artist in 1976 at his Blackheath studio. Standing in front of one of the dozens of portraits and self-portraits hanging or stacked against the walls, he said of the sitters: "I've been affected by his presence more than any personality I've painted."

Earlier I had joined Bratby at London Zoo, the sifter in question being Guy the gorilla, all 37 stone of him, broodingly gazing out from behind the bars of his cage as he had done for the previous 29 years. "I've been captivated by him, he has this enormous personal magnetism," Bratby said. "What I feel when sketching Guy is the primitive side of man, of myself, and how his eyes are mirrors of the subconscious, of the beast-in-man, held in check."

A series of head-and-shoulder portraits of Guy formed the bulk of Bratby's next one-man show. They were priced at £400 each.

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL MOYNIHAN,  
Nuthatch, Fletcher Close,  
North Mundham,  
Chichester, West Sussex,  
August 13.

### Fabians and monarch

From Dr Charles Goodson-Wickes,  
MP for Wimbledon (Conservative)

Sir, Why should the Fabian Society's plans to diminish the monarchy cause surprise (report, August 12; letters, August 17)?

What could be a more logical step, following the Labour Party's policy to abolish the hereditary element in the House of Lords?

After all, there are many republicans in the Labour Party.

Yours faithfully,  
CHARLES GOODSON-WICKES,  
House of Commons,  
August 20.

From Miss Elizabeth Erskine

Sir, With "supporters" like Mr Paul Richards, author of the latest Fabian pamphlet, the Royal Family scarcely needs opponents.

Perhaps instead of scrapping *God Save the Queen* we had better reinstate its neglected second verse: O Lord our God, arise, Scatter her enemies, And make them fall, Confound their politics, Frustrate their knavish tricks, On thee our hopes we fix, God save us all.

Yours sincerely,  
ELIZABETH ERSKINE,  
16 Albert Street, Cambridge,  
August 16.

From Mr Andrew Lawton

Sir, Whatever the views of the Fabian Society, we Odinists — being polytheists — sing a slightly different version of the national anthem: Gods Save the Queen.

Yours faithfully,  
A. LAWTON,  
Magelough House, Main Road,  
Grindleford, Derbyshire,  
August 19.











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THE TIMES WEDNESDAY AUGUST 21 1996

Abandon clutter for the Minimalist style and a world of wide open rooms, says Rachel Kelly

# Living in the new space age

Mark Guard's flats are only for the tidy. In this Modernist architect's new development in Pollen Street, London W1, the eight flats feature hidden sliding doors. They peel back to create open-plan spaces obliterating the divisions between bedrooms, sitting rooms and kitchens.

The conversion of a former office building developed by Jeremy Samuels of Samson Properties will be ready in the autumn. Flats will be offered from £230,000 through the agent Winkworth. The showers are circular, the baths of limestone, the walls stark and white, and the scheme marked throughout by its absence of door knobs, corning or architectural frills. It is a case of Minimalism *par excellence*, what Doris Saatchi described as "freedom from the tyranny of knick-knacks".

As Herbert Ypma points out in his new book, *London Minimal*, London leads the world in its Minimalist approach. A small crop of London architects and designers led by John Pawson, Stanton Williams, and Mark Guard are exponents of the theory that in the chaotic hustle and bustle of urban life, one's home must be a serene retreat.

Sue Crewe, the editor of *House and Garden*, says: "As 'out there' becomes more challenging — more to do, more choice, more information, more traffic, more people, more fear — so we need our homes to be serene and safe. Pale, uncluttered interiors are appearing, not at the whim of interior decorators pronouncing 'The Nineties are neutral' but because of an instinctive need for our houses to be more tranquil."

The quickest way to serenity is to banish clutter in favour of the luxury of space. Minimalism may seem to be about having less but, as Mr Guard says, it is about providing more options. "My work is not a process of reduction," he says. "It is one of addition. I believe that I add extra functions to a house. People can change the way they use my rooms. Giving my clients the chance to change the

interior architecture of a flat with the push of a button rates as the ultimate in convenience and luxury. The main feature of my work is to make space flexible. In Pollen Street, you can control space using the sliding doors."

In an earlier Guard project in Paris, one small space was unified by a stone-tiled floor that ran out to include a terrace. Press a button, and a slash of previously hidden wall slides out to enclose a bedroom, so an unexpected guest can be accommodated. Though the glass wall of the bathroom provides a greater sense of space, it seems to lack in privacy. But at the push of yet another button, the clear glass becomes opaque.

The second characteristic of this band of Minimalists is to stress the quality of the materials used in their developments. So in Pollen Street, for example, the stress is on the limestone baths and the birchwood floors.

Ironically, such a movement had its origins in London, home of chintz and cluttered houses. Yet as Mr Ypma points out, the cosiness we associate with our domestic interiors is relatively new. Until 50 years ago, England was seen as the home of advanced technology, so much so that the American author Ralph Waldo Emerson could talk about the country's "passion for utility".

Mr Ypma says: "A minimal approach is much more part of the national character than people imagine, from the restraint of Georgian London's Classicism to the high-technology standardisation of the Industrial Revolution."

This passion was taken by Britain in the work of George Gilbert Scott, through the Festival of Britain in the 1950s and on into the 1960s when London again scooped the world with Terence Conran's Habitat, which was the first chain of shops to take the principles of good design to the public.

London Minimal, by Herbert Ypma, is published by Thames and Hudson (£16.95).



Hilary Billinger, who has lived in this Mark Guard-designed house in north London since 1992

## 'A warm place to be in'

"People think it must be very clinical and cold to live in a Minimalist house. In fact, it is quite the opposite," says Hilary Billinger, who has lived in a Mark Guard-designed house in Kensal Rise, north London, since 1992. "Thanks to the glass, there is masses of light, which makes it a very warm place to be in."

The lack of clutter is relaxing. "You are not always having to pick things up," says Mrs Billinger, a 37-year-old BBC employee. "The house is cleverly designed so that there is masses of storage space."

Both Mrs Billinger and her husband Steve came from Canada, which she thinks has inspired her desire for space. "Homes there are larger and more spacious. I

think traditional Victorian houses in London tend to have small rooms to hold the heat," she says. "We yearned for space."

The house has folding doors that can enlarge or reduce the size of the rooms, and four bedrooms upstairs have been knocked into one living area.

When the Billingers moved in, they did not have any children. Now they plan the house with children in mind. Since the arrival of their first baby five weeks ago, they are considering whether or not they will have to move. "It is okay for the moment," Mrs Billinger says, "but in the future she might fall down the stairs, to which a stairgate cannot be fitted, and there are glass walls."

## Rooms with a view to improvise

A good collection of Minimalist houses is for sale. Conan Walsh writes. Knight Frank (0171-480 6848) is asking £845,000 for a flat at St Peter's, 25-29 Henrietta Square, London WC2. Designed for the existing owner by Philip Gumuchdjian and decorated in an unadorned style by Anna Norman, the flat has views of the historic gardens of St Paul's Church. The spacious, double-height reception area leads via a sliding oak door into the master bedroom and dressing room, and a timber, steel and glass staircase leads to the mezzanine study or second bedroom.

Knight Frank's books can also boast that rare thing: a Minimalist conversion outside London. About £500,000 will buy you Stmod Place in Warrham, West Sussex. Externally, care has been taken to retain the old-world charm of this country house, and the gardens and courtyard remain highly formalised. But the interior has been redesigned to give a new owner almost endless scope for improvisation, and walls have been demolished to provide larger spaces.

In London, Savills (0171-824 9033) is selling the newly rebuilt 39 Queen's Grove, St John's Wood, for £2.25 million. Behind a street-fronted period facade, the house has been enlarged to accommodate at least five bedrooms. The reception areas are open-plan and the lower-ground floor can be opened out into one reception area, leading to the garden. The area could also be divided to provide a dining room with a high ceiling.

The Manhattan Loft Corporation (0171-631 1888) specialises in buying, fitting and selling shell apartments, often converted from redundant commercial and industrial buildings, enabling buyers to define their own space. The company has redeveloped the former Marquee club in Richmond Mews, Soho, into a building which now houses not only Sir Terence Conran's Mezzo restaurant but 28 flats (priced at between £88,000 and £700,000) and three penthouses (£550,000 to £2.5 million).

The corporation's latest development at Bankside Lofts, Hopton Street SE1, has 130 flats, ranging in price from £70,000 to £650,000, and forged from a Victorian office building and a 12-storey tower. The flats look on to the City and St Paul's Cathedral.



The Mezzo restaurant in Soho is in a building that also houses 28 flats and three penthouses

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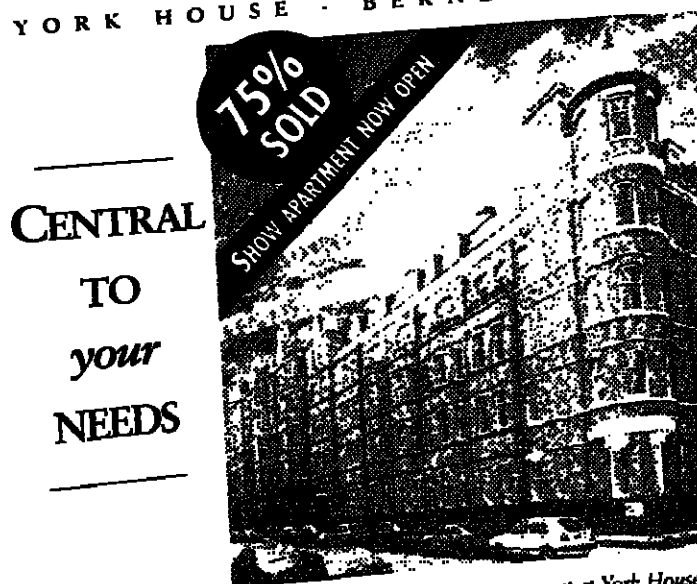


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The Germans are looking to Britain for humour

## Don't mention the war...

You would think that any nation willing to entrust its fate to Helmut Kohl already showed quite a rugged sense of humour, but the Germans just don't see it that way.

Germans, according to a weekend newspaper report, are so desperate to develop a nose for madcap fun that they are scouring Britain for sitcoms and sitcom writers. But what does that prove? That British sitcoms are king of the heap? Or does it merely underline — as critics of British sitcoms would probably agree — quite how clueless Germans are when it comes to knowing what's funny and what isn't?

There are only two hit German comedies: the *Harald Schmidt Show*, styled on David Letterman, and *Samstag Nacht*, based on America's *Saturday Night Live*. This is why ZDF and RTL, the state-owned German television stations, have been sent to frisk the Edinburgh Festival for hot comedians and scriptwriters who can craft Germany's first situation comedy: the sort of thing Germans like as *Fawlty Towers*, the slapstick of *Mr Bean*, *Blackadder* and the bad behaviour of *Ab Fab*.

All very watchable, of course. But what else is there lower down the British batting order? Are there any other current or recent triumphs — or are the critics right when they say that the best British sitcoms now live in the archives, alongside *Fawlty Towers*, *Dad's Army*, *Hancock*, *Step by Step* and *Porridge*?

Today the big noise in sitcoms is made by the top American imports such as *Friends*, *Seinfeld*, *The Larry Sanders Show*, *Frasier*, *Seinfeld* and the late, much lamented *Cheers*. What chips can British sitcom producers throw into this pot?

Simon Nye's *Men Behaving Badly* has done spectacularly enough at home to arouse interest abroad, and an Americanised version will take a bow on NBC this autumn. But American highbrows, used to the sly wordplay of *Seinfeld* and *Friends*, and maybe less used to the slapstick and bottom jokes that are a staple of British sitcoms, are already getting sniffy about the arrival of *Men Behaving Badly*.

Elaine Showalter, Professor of Literature at Princeton and TV critic of *People* magazine, is agnostic. "The characters are stereotypes, the jokes predictable," she sniffs. "The best and most successful American sitcoms, like *Friends* and *Seinfeld*, are superbly written: each episode usually has three plot lines that are brought together in the most ingenious way. Such subtlety is beyond Nye." Yikes!

Even *The Economist* recently found itself fretting about the British sitcom's chances against all the heavyweight American competition. Its conclusion about the cut-throat sitcom world was that working out "which succeed, and why, seems as mysterious as ever". Though maybe not quite so mysterious in the case of such sad British stabs as *Nice Day at the Office*, *Oh Dr Beeching* and others too grim to recall.

Champions of the American sitcom (we must keep reminding ourselves that brilliant as *Seinfeld* and *Cheers* might be, we see only the cream of the crop here) argue that the group-writing technique, combined with the practice of rewriting right up to the last minute, will obviously produce sharper, tighter scripts. It is hardly a very new idea: the German-born film-maker Ernst Lubitsch took months to polish his jokes, constantly sending back drafts to writers with the accented reproach: "Purty, yes. But is it hilarious?"

Well, *Cheers* and *Seinfeld* and *Friends* might not solve the world's problems, but they are more often "hilarious" than much of the current British crop. And it is not just Yankee boasting. Even Simon Nye rates *Friends* "a masterpiece of deft humour". Returning recently from a trip to American sitcomland, Sue Teddern, who writes for *Birds of a Feather*, cooed that *Friends* "isn't just funny, it's funny in a cool, confident, we-don't-have-to-try-hard kind of way... it's too easy to dismiss the American process as a big-scale production line, compared to our cute cottage industry. Whatever they're doing, they're doing it right because of their approach, not despite it."

What's the trick? Whereas the best American sitcoms are certainly more daring, sophisticated, intelligent, metropolitan, fresh and adult, as well as being funny, their English rivals are still peopled with characters who huff and mug and panic histrionically like Terry Scott in *Terry and June*, who say "Oooh, I say" and smirk suggestively when someone asks them if they've got a Curly-Wurly in their pocket, and who act in the exaggerated gestures of provincial pantomime performers.

But why can't Germans nurture home-grown funny talent? According to Andreas Rolf, who writes for Germany's equivalent of *Radio Times*, German humour today is stodgy because it lacks Jewish bite. "Our culture has suffered from the loss of the sharpness, the Jewish wordplay, the verbal duelling." Now that really is funny. Even to Lubitsch. Actually, it's even a little spooky.



JOE JOSEPH

## A drink to your health, Oz

THERE was a spine-chilling moment for Alan Yentob, the BBC's newly appointed director of programmes, last week. At the unveiling of the not-so-gripping daytime schedule at the Television Centre, all was going marvellously until Pat Smylie, the veteran freelancer, piped up with a question about the BBC's new programme *Style Challenge*, which offers fashion and hair makeovers to prison officers and frustrated housewives. "Tell me, Mr Yentob, how come you are still listing Oz Clarke as one of your presenters when he was in fact murdered last week?" she inquired.

Panic flickered across Mr Yentob's handsome features and his eyes darted from one aide to the next as collective sniggers were stifled. But after a hasty word in his ear from a press officer, the famous Yentob smile returned. The hapless Ms Smylie had confused wine expert Oz Clarke.

star of *Food and Drink*, with Ossie Clarke, the Sixties fashion designer stabbed to death at his home earlier this month.

● MUCH as she yearns to be left alone to enjoy a life of privacy, the Duchess of York's arm has been sufficiently twisted into giving her first live interview in America to Diane Sawyer, the TV host.

In a show which coincides with the launch of her autobiography on November 13, the Duchess will no doubt open her heart about how she has coped with relentless media intrusion into her life etc.

But the cynics who are already groaning inwardly should perhaps be grateful for small mercies. For news reaches *The Listener* that Britain's favourite redhead had formally agreed to host her own chat show on one of the big American networks.

The man behind the scheme was her loyal friend, the multimillionaire impresario Robert Stigwood, who had the deal signed, sealed and delivered. It was only after concerned friends in Britain persuaded her that it was perhaps not a good idea to become the Royal Family's answer to Gaby Roslin that she pulled out. Shame.



Alan Yentob: panic attack



James Major: troublemaker

### Acting president

THE French may still be spitting on our beef, but at least the Union Flag will be flying in a small corner of Normandy from August 30. The *Listener* can reveal that the fragrant British actress Charlotte Rampling will be this year's president of the jury for the Deauville Annual American Film Festival.

Ms Rampling will be judging a series of big-name blockbusters, picking from Eddie Murphy's *Film Professor*, *Foldingue*, *My Doubles*.

### My Wife and Me

Andie McDowell, Ken Russell's *Escape from Los Angeles* and Bill Pullman and Will Smith's *Independence Day*, the No 1 American box-office film this summer.

One Hollywood star will not be gracing Deauville. The diminutive Tom Cruise, whose film *Mission: Impossible* will be represented, is too busy holidaying in Capri.

● JAMES MAJOR, son of the Prime Minister, is showing unerring signs of becoming a chip off the old block.

TCC, The Children's Channel, carried out a survey for the launch of its "Looks Like Trouble" season of programming which marks its transition to a cable channel for teenagers. It asked 40,000 youths, via the Internet, whom they considered to be the country's biggest troublemaker.

In number two was the Prime Minister, who polled 6,000 votes. At number ten was James. "It is quite cool for him to get a place in the top ten," a TCC spokesman says. "He comes in just after Paul Gascoigne and Camilla Parker Bowles."

### Small wonder

CONSIDERING the hundreds of column inches devoted to the story of the single mother pregnant with octuplets, would it be reasonable to assume that Mandy Allwood is now a household name?

Not if you work for *The Observer*. In an article last Sunday headlined "I've been misquoted", the woman in question became a Mandy Smallwood. Confused possibly by the paper's erratic new layout, subs have perhaps been treating themselves to longer-than-usual lunches.

## An eye for the main chance



Cheek of the devil: Branson hijacked the Tory campaign

VIRGIN Atlantic boss Richard Branson, never one to miss an opportunity, hijacked the publicity surrounding M&C Saatchi's "New Labour, New Danger" poster at the weekend.

As the Tory party scrapped over whether it should run such a campaign, Branson used the affair to take a pot-shot at his old adversary, BA. His agency, Rainey Kelly Campbell Roskill, put together a press ad which carried the line: "BA/AA merger, real danger" and featured pictures of the two airlines' chiefs with their eyes replaced with the sinister pair from the Labour-bashing poster.

Branson's agency spotted the opportunity for a one-off ad and contacted him on his private island for the go-ahead. Such is the nature of client servicing these days.

### ADVERTISING

M&C SAATCHI'S bubble has finally burst — and the rival Cordiant group agency, Bates Dorland, has most happily burst it.

Dorlands has lured a key creative duo away from Maurice's breakaway shop back into the Cordiant fold. Richard Dean and Martha Riley, both former employees at Dorlands' sister agency Saatchi and Saatchi, are to join Dorlands next month.

Riley worked on the Club 19-30 poster campaign at Saatchi, and the pair both worked on Silk Cut and Courage Best while at M&C Saatchi.

Their departure marks the first senior staff loss at M&C Saatchi since it was launched 17 months ago.

THE Advertising Association is to give parents practical advice on how to bring up their offspring in a consumer-driven mass media culture.

The trade federation has assembled a set of guidelines which draw on a fund of academic research and parenting knowledge and are aimed at returning power to those who are older and wiser (and who, after all, hold the purse strings).

The guidelines, drawn up in handy booklet form, are to be released this week and are being made available to parents through the National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations, while additional copies are being sent to local education authorities and central libraries. Kids, you have been warned.

BELINDA ARCHER

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# Hold the front page for a scoop on the girl next door

If famous faces sell magazines why does *Extract* (circulation 267,165) sell more copies than *Vanity Fair* (82,137)? This not unreasonable question confronted readers when they opened Ben Arogundade's new magazine *Extract* last month.

Delving further they found two pages blank, except for the words: "Close your eyes right here and imagine an eight-page fashion spread featuring slamin' celebrity supermodels wearing wildly expensive clothes... NOT in this magazine, baby!"

*Extract*, you see, does not do celebrities. In a bold move designed to set it apart from the *Hellos* of this world, Arogundade has banned the famous from getting so much as a chiselled cheekbone in his magazine. No photographs of the Princess of Wales, no interviews with Paul and Sheryl Gascoigne, just 100 pages devoted to the editor's specialist subject, real people.

Arogundade believes the public is now suffering from star fatigue after years of being fed a diet of recycled pictures and interviews from people who, he says, have ceased to be interesting. The public, he says, needs an alternative.

To judge by the sales of his first issue, which featured an unknown house decorator from El Salvador as its cover star, he may well have a point. Of an original print run of 50,000 copies, *Extract* has virtually sold out. More than 43,000 people were willing to fork out £2.50 to read about wheel-clampers, prostitutes, housewives, drugs dealers and parish priests.

The second issue, due out in two weeks' time, promises more of the same: loan sharks, rent boys, telephone hookers,

Carol Midgley reports on a new publishing success story as jaded readers finally succumb to star fatigue



Editor Ben Arogundade's magazine is devoid of celebrities

real-life killers, a day-in-the-life of a Manchester launderette. The concept is not new, but what Arogundade claims makes *Extract* different is that it is exclusively about ordinary people and a celebration of their lives.

The new issue (right) features the face of Christiana Deutsch, a 22-year-old student from Wiesbaden, Germany. At a glance she appears to be a classic Hollywood starlet with pouting lips and a Marilyn Monroe hairstyle. Closer inspection reveals that her face is not, in fact, famous at all, illustrating, says Arogundade, that all of us have charisma which stems from our individual personalities.

It was Calvin Klein who recently redoubled the interest in the "real revolution" — using ordinariness and imperfection as a marketing tool — with his advertising campaigns for the unisex perfume

CK One and his jeanswear. Non-famous people were photographed alongside Kate Moss. When his "Lolita" jeans ads were accused of being too close to child pornography for comfort, Klein responded by saying: "The whole point of this campaign is that regular people have a glamour inside them which is tied to their independence. And you can find it anywhere, not just at the modelling agency or movie studio."

Arogundade, 31, says: "Editors and television producers think that the public is obsessed with Hollywood movie stars, but it obviously isn't true. Twelve million people tune in to watch *Blind Date*, a programme whose stars are ordinary people. More and more fashion designers are using non-famous models. *Reader's Digest* has never had Madonna on its front cover, but it is still the most popular

magazine in Britain. Surely this must mean something?

"Celebrities cannot guarantee high sales or good ratings. Gaby Roslin had a lot of A-list, blue-chip names on her Channel 4 chat show and it still didn't grab people. One of the problems is that there are too few celebrities to go round. When a big star visits Britain or has a new record coming out they are courted by every magazine so their face ends up on two or three covers."

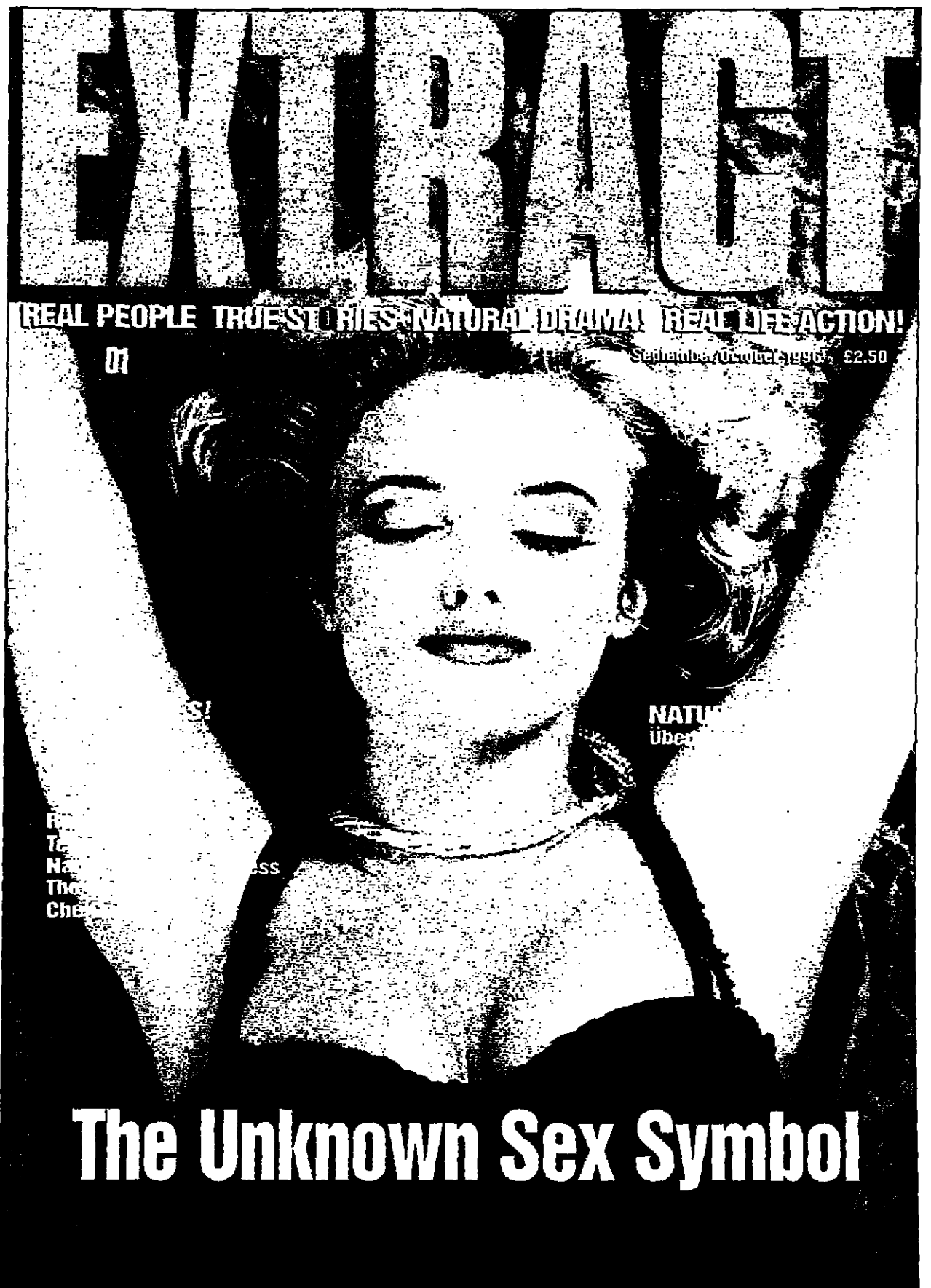
"Once a celebrity has given 100 interviews it is unlikely they will be able to tell you anything new ever again. Robert de Niro, George Michael and Prince never give interviews because they have realised there is little left to say of any great significance."

Arogundade, a bachelor born in London to Nigerian parents, is a former architect who, after being made redundant, began his interest in magazines. He noticed how much material was duplicated from one title to the next and set about investigating a radically different option.

He now produces *Extract* with the help of contributors and a tiny staff from a small office in Fulham, west London.

The magazine is published by a new company, *Extract Enterprises*, which is funded by the American-based publishing software developers, *The Media Services Group*.

"It is not as if people will get our magazine, and never read about famous people again," Arogundade says. "We simply believe that there is so much fascinating stuff to be written about the experiences of people who have never given an interview or been chased down the street by the paparazzi."



*Extract's* cover girl may look like a film star: in fact, she is Christiana Deutsch, a 22-year-old German student

## When a definition of hell is being 'kebabled' in public

Let's not descend into personal abuse," Jeremy Paxman implored one of the participants in *You Decide*, the BBC's new public participation current affairs programme last week. It was a request that many of his interviewees on *Newsnight* might well have wanted to put to him.

From my experience as a Tory press officer booking Cabinet ministers on interview programmes, most politicians would describe the prospect of being berated by a combination of Paxman and a studio audience as the very definition of interview hell.

But giving the public the chance to interrogate politicians and other movers and shakers without the medium of a professional interviewer is an increasingly popular format for news and current affairs programmes. It combines high ideals of democratic accountability with pragmatic considerations about cost — studio audiences are cheap, which is always a strong selling point to the networks in these days of tight budgetary controls.

*You Decide* is the latest of this genre. Paxman has estab-

Simon Brooke reveals that the worst fear of government politicians is being interrogated on radio or television by aggressive interviewers and live studio audiences

lished a niche for himself as a tenacious and irreverent interviewer, but at least politicians believe that he plays by certain rules and his style has the merit of familiarity.

The public on the other hand are, to a large extent, an unknown quantity. For a press officer whose party is in government, studio audiences present particular difficulties. Government ministers know that they will be given particularly rough treatment: a small proportion of the audience may not agree with something that the Labour Party or the Liberal Democrats stand for, but a large number will hate most of what the Government is doing. When members of a studio audience or a phone-in publicly berate a wriggling politician it is known as being "kebabled".

But many interviewers believe this is a nonsense. "The

implication that there is something magical about being a member of the public is frankly daft," says John Humphrys, a presenter on Radio 4's *Today* programme. "We are all members of the public as well as being professional interviewers: we all have kids, we pay taxes, we are worried about crime and we vote."

He is sceptical about what can be achieved by allowing viewers and listeners to interrogate politicians directly. "The public have been interviewing politicians in one form or another for 25 years or so. I can only think of three or four examples of where they have come up with something, so I don't think that there is an overwhelming argument in favour of it."

Naturally, the producers of public participation programmes have other ideas. "Other than at election times politi-



Jeremy Paxman: tenacious

cians rarely get to meet large numbers of ordinary people in a formal setting," says Nick Uchman, former producer of Radio 4's *Any Questions?* "We get people from all walks of life raising issues which seem important to them and that is very unusual. Even in an Oxford Union debate the audience is all of a certain type, whereas we might get 400 ordinary people who have come together in a hall in Houndsditch, for example."

Today: Most politicians prefer being interviewed on breakfast radio because they can use a radio car rather than travel to a studio. The interview slot just after the eight o'clock news is regarded as the kudos spot.

Question Time: Some politicians enjoy the opportunity to debate with the public directly but many, especially Tories, hate it. Opposition politicians find the programme much easier than

### WHAT THEY LOVE AND HATE

ministers since they can fuel the audience's concerns rather than try to meet them.

Any Questions? Some politicians take the view that because it is a radio programme *Any Questions?* provides a more civilised, thoughtful debate than television's *Question Time*.

Newsnight: It is viewed as

journalists listening out for a Monday front-page story.

Frost: Frost's loose, relaxed style of questioning gives politicians the feeling that they can get their message across. "It's more inquisitorial than accusatorial," according to one former minister.

On the Record: Politicians don't like doing Sunday programmes — when else do they see their families? There is also the belief that the only viewers are political

Dimbleby: Politicians have discovered that Jonathan Dimbleby is an effective chairman and that his audience is well-behaved.

It was difficult not to be moved by the whoop of joy that rang through this office last Thursday as the editor who subs this column heard that her daughter had got three A levels. Across the land, most of us enjoyed the delight or vicariously suffered the sorrow of neighbours or colleagues as A-level results were posted.

There was no joy in Fleet Street, however. Editors who constantly publish why-oh-why articles bemoaning Britain's failures spat on a success story, insulting the triumphs of thousands of students in England and Wales, their teachers and their parents. It was powerful confirmation that Fleet Street prefers bad news — and that if the news is good editors prefer to snatch defeat from victory. Yet the same trend passes without any of Britain's scepticism in Germany, France and Japan.

Only yesterday Terry Venables, the former England soccer coach who led England so gloriously to the semi-finals of Euro 96, was lamenting in *The Times* that the English were too reluctant to celebrate victory and too eager to downgrade our own achievements. I have news for Tel. It's the same

story for schools, too. As record results were posted yet again last week, most editors, yet again led by the Conservative MP Sir Rhodes Boyson — who last taught in a school more than 20 years ago — joined the chorus, saying that if so many more students were passing, standards must be going down.

"Suspicious," said *The Daily Telegraph*: "A cruel betrayal," said the *Daily Express*: "A bogus education," said *The Sunday Times*.

One of the qualities of a good journalist is curiosity, the ability repeatedly to ask the question "Why?" in the search for at least some sort of partial truth. Yet so many of the A-level newspaper reports were lazy and uncurious. Submitted as A-level papers, they would have been lucky to get a D or an E. Few reporters bothered to do even a few simple sums.

Among all 18-year-olds in England and Wales, about 40 per cent — 240,000 — study for A levels. One in five

## Fleet Street gets an A for moaning but E for analysis



fails. So about 32 per cent of all 18-year-olds — say about 190,000 — succeed in passing at least one subject. Only 16 per cent of that cohort achieve an A grade — a maximum of about 30,000, given that many candidates get two or three As. That puts a spin on the A-level results that has yet to appear in any newspaper and suggests a conclusion at odds with the arguments in so many thundering leading articles.

The question becomes not whether we are doing too well but whether we are doing well enough if only 30,000 18-year-olds a year obtain the highest A-level grade. It is surely also good news that more 18-year-olds

are achieving Ds and Es no matter what the subject, at least the general level of attainment in the British population is rising.

As they do so, it is worth noting one small item of British social history which occurred this week — the appearance for the first time in a tabloid daily of a 36-page supplement listing university vacancies and confirming the arrival of mass higher education. All credit to the *Daily Mirror*, which repackaged the list offered in its sister paper, *The Independent*.

It is a pity that more editors of national newspapers do not have children in sixth forms. If they did, they would understand how hard this

generation works, how well they are taught and just how bright the best of them are. Unlike my generation, they study science until the age of 16, most speak two foreign languages and they do nine or ten GCSEs and up to four A levels.

A few newspapers did try to put the annual controversy in some sort of proper context. A study in *The Daily Telegraph* showed that the standard of questions had certainly not changed (although it was less certain about standards of marking). *The Observer* had the bright idea of asking the head boy of Sir Rhodes's old school, who got four A grades, to sit his 1943 Higher School Certificate. It showed that he would have been marked down in 1943 for being too clever. A letter to *The Times* from the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference, a fierce guardian of academic standards, argued that quality

was rising in some elements of A level.

*The Guardian* uncovered a study going back to 1910 which judged that A-level maths had become harder since 1951. *The Sunday Times* found a school where the sixth form had increased from eight to 120 in seven years and A-level results had improved by 95 per cent in the past three years.

The view I shared was put in *The Guardian* by Tony Higgins, the chief executive of the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service. The critics could not have it both ways, he argued. The improvement this year was met by a cacophony of complaints. Yet if the results had been worse than in previous years, the question would have been what was wrong with our schools.

Editors might also look up their back copies of *The Bookseller or Prospect*, both of which have published a recent lecture by Professor George Steiner. He pointed out that entrance exams in mathematics and physics for the first year university students were what would have been post-doctoral research less than 15 years ago. And we dare to say that standards are falling.

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